

# BAYEUX

ITS CATHEDRAL & CHURCHES



BELL'S HANDBOOKS TO  
CONTINENTAL CHURCHES



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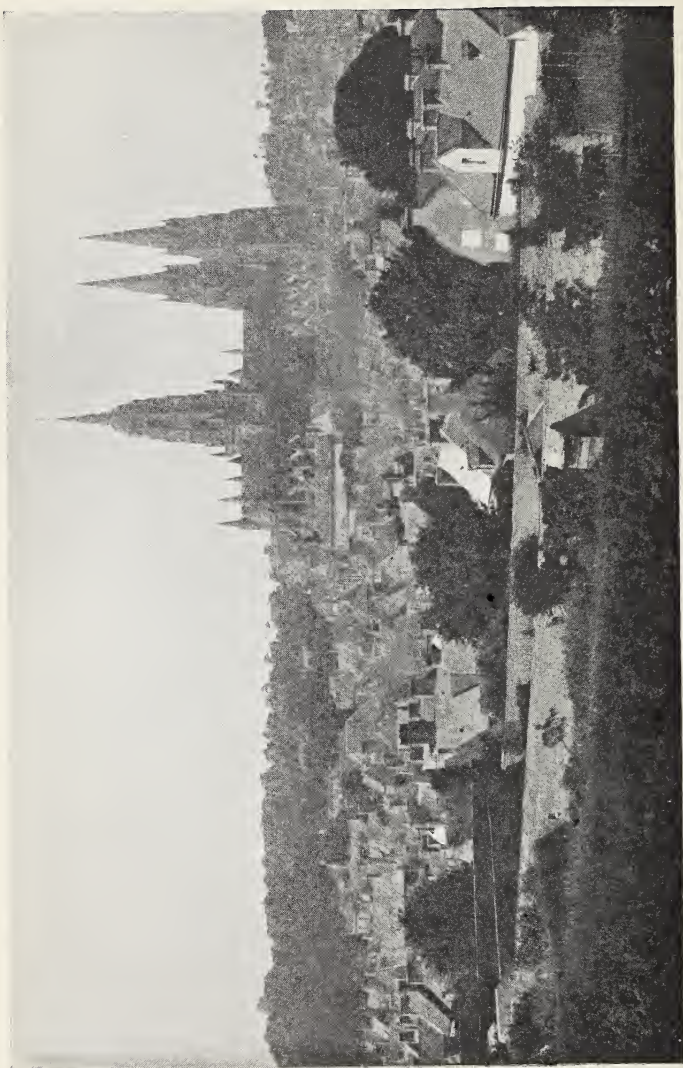
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BELL'S HANDBOOK TO  
CONTINENTAL CHURCHES

BAYEUX



*N.D. photo.*]

VIEW OF BAYEUX FROM THE NORTH.

# THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF BAYEUX

AND OTHER HISTORICAL RELICS IN  
ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

BY THE  
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WITH XL



ILLUSTRATIONS

ARMS OF THE CITY OF BAYEUX

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## PREFACE

THE author's thanks are due to the Rev. Thomas Ashe, Chaplain of Caen, and member of the Archæological Society of France, who possesses a minute knowledge of the antiquities of western Normandy; and to M. Emile Travers, Assistant Director of the Archæological Society of France, through whom permission was obtained to reproduce the interesting illustrations from that famous and very learned work, M. de Caumont's "Statistique Monumentale"; while M. Brechet, of Caen, provided some excellent photographs to serve as illustrations for this little book. Use has also been made of the excellent collection of official photographs of the Historic Monuments of France, whose existence is a great credit to the French Government; and also of some of the well-known N.D. photographs, issued by M. J. Vasse, of Paris.



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## INTRODUCTION

FRANCE justly claims special distinction in the middle ages for her uncommon skill in architecture. For, in the thirteenth century, she was enabled to originate a fresh style of design, undreamt of by earlier ages, unequalled in modern times, unsurpassed in any period known to history save one—the noble period of the palmy days of Athens, when long before the Christian era Greek art flourished on the Mediterranean seaboard, and the Parthenon arose in the beauteous capital of Greece, and Pæstum and Girgenti on the Italian and Sicilian shore.

By France is meant, not the vast territory now called by that name, but the little Ile de France, and the counties and earldoms and duchies immediately contiguous to it, then under the dominion of a saintly king, Louis IX., famed throughout Europe for his high and noble character, destined to remain famous to the end of time.

Now the France of St. Louis had a character all its own. Moreover that character, in one of its grandest aspects, is well exhibited, as John Ruskin loved to tell, in its wonderful architectural monuments. Take, for instance, such a magnificent structure as the glorious Cathedral of Amiens, so lofty, so simple, so pure, so majestic, so elevating to the soul of man. No one of average intelligence can gaze at the huge western doorway and enter that sacred pile without feeling something of the spiritual atmosphere of the place, some genuine touch of its

deep religious meaning. And if you care to read on the spot Ruskin's famous description of the western sculpture, which he calls the Bible of Amiens, then certainly the strength of that religious feeling must needs be intensified.

The Gothic style, more than any other style, leaves a spiritual impression on the soul of man. Yet Gothic architecture has a mind as well as a soul. All that wealth and beauty of carved imagery, of clustered column and pointed arch, seemingly tossed about under the wild inspiration of a careless but godlike genius, is also in sober truth the careful result of intentional design and elaborate calculation; by means of which that marvellous lightness of effect, that lofty vaulted roof, that glorious stained glass, is all compelled to be subservient to the one grand idea dominating the artificer's skill.

Let us explain.

The main idea in a great Gothic church was to raise the vault high above the earth, upwards towards heaven itself, but never to dispense with the vault altogether, as is so often done in modern churches. At the same time the Gothic designer was eager to dispense with the heavy pillars and thick wall work of earlier ages, which formed the main support of the solid and often cumbrous vaults then in vogue, and to introduce in their place the slender shaft, the delicate pointed arch, and elaborate window tracery.

The great problem then was this.

In what way could these heavy vaults be best supported, when the pillars and walls were intentionally constructed of insufficient strength to serve this purpose?

It was reserved for men like Robert of Luzarches, in the days of St. Louis, to solve this difficult problem. And the solution is noteworthy.



It was accomplished by means of external flying buttresses, ornamented in such a manner as to be of themselves of material assistance in the general artistic effect of the whole church. Here then the mathematician's skill was in high demand as well as the artist's genius.

The exact nature and precise value of thrust and counter-thrust must be calculated to the utmost nicety, or the ponderous vault will fall, and in its fall crush all the pillars and arches below. The actual thickness of the upright buttresses is also a matter of considerable importance, for by their aid the lateral thrust is successfully counteracted.

And so it is evident that beneath the bewildering mass of traceried window and carved pinnacle, of lofty vault and flying buttress, there is concealed skilled design and deep intent. And noteworthy writers have maintained that "half veiled design" is an essential element of true beauty.

Now the point aforementioned is one of the principal characteristics which distinguishes Gothic architecture, called by the French "ogivale," from all other forms of building through the wide world. It is the special point in which the Gothic designer proves *par excellence* his true power of originality.

Therefore it has seemed important to dwell thereupon at the beginning of this little volume: all the more so because this matter is in general but little understood. When it is understood, then surely the actual *raison d'être* of the pointed arch<sup>1</sup> and the flying buttress becomes quite apparent.

Yet, on the other hand, Gothic architecture, as it first appears

<sup>1</sup> The origin of the pointed arch is really due to the exigencies of Gothic vaulting, though the idea of employing it for ornamental purposes may have been suggested by the use of intersecting Norman arches for the purpose of wall decoration as in Ely Cathedral and elsewhere.

in northern France, is a distinct historic development from the earlier Norman work. Innumerable instances of this simple fact may be seen in the village churches of Normandy. Frequently you see a Norman choir and a Gothic nave, presenting a strangely irregular outline at a distance, for the Norman sought not the great height which the Gothic builder always loved. Take, by way of example, Pont Audemer. Here a very curious thing has happened. The present level of the roof of the Gothic nave is raised not only above the level of the roof of the old Norman choir, but also above the level of the roof of the old central Norman tower, while a sixteenth-century tower has been added at the northern side of the western extremity of the nave to give some appearance of architectural symmetry to the whole church. At a glance it is easy enough to distinguish the far different dates of the various parts, which are in curious contrast to each other.

Now Bayeux Cathedral also contains Norman and Gothic work, and presents this same curious contrast on a large scale. But in Bayeux Cathedral the charming combination of the two styles is so managed that a sense of harmony rather than of unpleasant contrast is produced. In fact, the combination is in this instance so beautiful in every way that in gazing thereupon a deep sense of spiritual repose is shed over the soul of man.

Herein lies the special excellence of the grand interior of Bayeux Cathedral. There are more magnificent churches in France,<sup>1</sup> planned and built on a larger scale; there are churches

<sup>1</sup> Not in the fair realm of France, but in the chill north of England, is now to be found the finest monument of Norman art that exists throughout the wide world. Durham Cathedral is unequalled elsewhere in majesty of form, in grandeur of position, in dignity of ecclesiastical magnificence. Its massive pillars and solid round arches in a special manner suggest the Norman idea of strength and permanence in religion.

which are more perfect exponents of the best Gothic style; but surely there are none in which the two great styles of French architecture are more gracefully blended. Examine carefully the nave. See with what exquisite skill the Gothic clerestory fits on to the bold Norman arcading below. Each is kept distinct, for the lines of the piers do not run through from the vault to the floor, yet there is no incongruous contrast—on the contrary, the later Gothic work, in itself supremely elegant, seems to grow quite naturally out of the rude Norman work that lies underneath.

Yet note that in the choir, where the pure Gothic style entirely prevails (with the exception of the four pillars of the apse behind the high altar), there the slender delicate shafts run through without a break from the floor to the sculptured capitals, from which the vaulting springs.

For the student, then, Bayeux Cathedral possesses a special claim to attention: for no one can comprehend the great principles of the noble art of architecture without making a serious study of all the methods by which the marvellous transition from Norman to Gothic was effected towards the end of the twelfth century.

To my mind this beautiful and striking characteristic of Bayeux Cathedral is a complete set off to the slight feeling of disappointment felt on discovering that so small a portion of the existing sacred edifice can be really attributed to the days of Bishop Odo, and the reign of King William the Conqueror.

R. S. MYLNE, M.A., B.C.L. OXON.

*March, 1904.*







*N. D. photo.]*

THE SOUTH SIDE AND TRANSEPT.

# BAYEUX CATHEDRAL.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE HISTORY OF THE CATHEDRAL.

BAYEUX was well known to the Romans, and is generally believed to be the same place as was named by them Augustodurus. The capital of the Biducasses or Bajocasses received some notice from Julius Caesar, and here two Roman roads met. Vases and statues of Roman workmanship have been frequently dug up in and around Bayeux, for the most part belonging to the second century of the Christian era. In the Museum is still preserved a superb head of Minerva in alabaster, and a white marble torso of Venus, as well as other interesting relics of the Roman occupation. Excavations undertaken in 1759 and 1765 demonstrated that the Church of St. Lawrence was built upon the site of the Roman baths, and various fragments of sculptured marble then discovered proved that this Roman sculpture must have been of magnificent proportions. In fact, everything goes to show that Bayeux was an important town in the days of the Roman dominion.

St. Exuperius, the Apostle of the Bessin, was the first Bishop, and flourished towards the middle or end of the fourth century, either immediately before or soon after the breaking up of the Roman Empire. St. Regnobert was the most distinguished of his immediate successors, and according to ancient tradition began to build a cathedral church which was totally destroyed in the ninth century, probably burnt by the Norman invaders.

Before the days of Rollo, however, a Saxon settlement had been established at Bayeux which is only five miles from the open sea, and the Emperor Charlemagne had settled in the Bessin some of his captive Saxons in the opening years of the ninth century. During the Merovingian Empire money was



coined at Bayeux with the inscription HBAIOCAS. Place names of Saxon origin may be noticed in this part of Normandy, more particularly along the sandy shore of the English Channel. Ouistreham with its curious church, conspicuous to passing ships, situated at the mouth of the River Orne, is well known to every traveller along the coast of Calvados. Professor Freeman well says: "Nowhere, out of the Old-Saxon and Frisian lands, can we find another district of continental Europe which is so truly a brotherland to our own."

By the year 911 Rollo had obtained possession of Rouen, and become the first Duke of Normandy. In the year 924 he conquered Bayeux, and the Bessin, and incorporated the western districts with the Norman duchy. On his conversion and baptism he began to build a new cathedral in the place of that which had been destroyed in the wars, and enriched the same by fresh endowments. In the year 1046 this sacred edifice was destroyed by a dreadful fire, but Hugh, then Bishop, and a relative of Richard I., Duke of Normandy, at once set to work to rebuild the Cathedral, which pious labour was completed on a magnificent scale by his successor the famous Odo, half brother of William the Conqueror, and nearly fifty years Bishop of Bayeux. The oldest portions of the existing church are Odo's work, and testify to his energy, wealth, and determination in the execution of a noble but difficult task.

This great work was completed in the true Norman style ten years after the conquest of England by Duke William and the Norman barons, and was dedicated or consecrated by John, Archbishop of Rouen with great pomp and ceremony in the year 1077 in the presence of William, King of England and Duke of Normandy, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and a goodly number of barons and bishops of the province. The magnificent candelabrum, arranged in the form of a crown, which Bishop Odo gave on this auspicious occasion, made of wood and copper, and coated with plates of silver, and sixteen feet in height, was destroyed by the Huguenots in 1562. In these wars of Religion and the Revolution nearly all the monuments and tombs were also destroyed. There is good reason to believe that the famous Tapestry of Bayeux was originally made for use on this important day, as a decoration for the bare Norman walls of the Cathedral nave. We cannot at this distance of time reproduce the exact aspect of Bishop Odo's building, but



enough remains in the solemn and gloomy crypt, and various fragments elsewhere, for a vivid imagination to conjure up the faint outline of the stately structure. Of the long line of the bishops of Bayeux none were more famous than Odo. He pre-



*Photo.*]

*[J. Brechet.*

OUISTREHAM.

pared forty—some say one hundred—ships to assist in conveying William's troops to England. He fought by the Norman Duke's side on the bloody battlefield of Senlac, and was conspicuous with his iron mace or war-club amongst the Norman host. His great share in making William's invasion successful was at once rewarded with the earldom of Kent (and afterwards of Hereford);

and when William's engagements required, he was practically left to act as Viceroy of England. In this his new civil position Odo was respected and feared rather than loved, and there is no doubt that on more than one occasion he made bad use of his vast power. He oppresses the men of Kent, he seizes lands belonging to the See of Canterbury, and plunders the church of Evesham. He even aspires to the Papal throne, and plans an expedition into Italy. He ventures to intrigue against William, when that stern monarch suddenly arrests him with his own hand, and keeps him in prison at Rouen until the end of his reign.

He was, however, present at William's burial, and then rebelled against William Rufus.<sup>1</sup> Being exiled from England, he resided for a season at his bishopric of Bayeux, but when his nephew Robert, Duke of Normandy, was stirred up to join the first crusade in 1096, the restless bishop determined himself to become a crusader, and being taken ill on the way died at Palermo in Sicily. Thus he hoped to expiate the errors of his past life, so full of strange vicissitudes. Thus he prepared to meet God.

Bishop Odo did not spend much of his time at Bayeux, but he was a great benefactor to his See, which was much in his thoughts. Besides the magnificent Cathedral which he built, he bestowed on the Chapter liberal endowments and munificent presents. He rebuilt dilapidated parish churches, and procured the services of able and well-educated clergy. Judge him as you will, Odo is the greatest of the bishops of Bayeux. The old chronicler, William of Poitiers says of him: "*Libentes eidem obsequabantur, ut acceptissimo domino, Normanni atque Britanni.*" Did any other bishop ever perform so great a variety of functions? Bishop Odo was warrior, earl, viceroy, prisoner and crusader,—the trusted friend and bitter enemy of two successive sovereigns.

When the mediaeval chroniclers say a town and church have been burnt down in warfare, it is often difficult to determine what precisely is meant by this declaration. Does it mean total destruction of the whole city, or the burning of all inflammable woodwork, the solid stonework remaining firm and strong as heretofore; a bit charred, but not destroyed? Yet it is certain

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1088 he attacked Pevensey by sea, and captured the castle, which he held against the English king till famine compelled surrender.

that in the year 1106 a terrible fate overtook the city of Bayeux. Henry I., King of England, had ever since his accession in 1100 been on bad terms with his elder brother Robert, Duke of Normandy, and in the battle of Tinchebrai he captured this Norman prince, and became possessed of the duchy. In this campaign Bayeux was besieged, taken and burnt by King Henry's army, and Odo's cathedral in part destroyed. It was not till the days of Bishop Philip Harcourt that the rebuilding was seriously undertaken, but in the year 1157 this prelate was deeply engaged upon the reconstruction of the Norman church. And it has been a matter of dispute amongst the best antiquaries whether the Norman portions of the nave of the existing structure should be referred to this period, or to the earlier days of Bishop Odo, whether in fact they should be referred to the years 1070-1077, or to the years 1120 or 1130 to 1160. The remainder of this great church is almost entirely thirteenth-century work, and with the close of the rule of the Norman dukes the early and more famous history came to an end.

In 1206 Bayeux surrendered to Philip Augustus, King of France, without a battle, and this prince immediately took away nearly all the political prerogatives of the town. He created the Vicomtes or Lordships of Caen and Vire out of the old lordship of Bayeux, and afterwards added the lordships of St. Lo and Thorigny. He also established a separate judicial administration at Caen, a town which was gradually rising to greater importance. These viscounts were judicial officials.

In 1356 the Duke of Lancaster and the Earl of Harcourt ravaged Normandy on behalf of Edward III., and captured Bayeux, burning part of the town.

In 1377 the walls of Bayeux were partly rebuilt under John the Good, King of France, and Louis XI. ordered Bishop Louis de Harcourt to continue the repair of the fortifications about 1469. Neither the walls of the town nor the castle now remain.

In 1417 the town being badly defended was again captured by the English forces under the Duke of Clarence. Henry V. kept his Christmas here, and Matthew Gough became governor of Bayeux. In the spring of 1450, Thomas Kyriel landed at Cherbourg with 3,000 men, while Robert Vere had 800 men at Caen, and Henry Norbury 400 at Vire, and these forces marched towards Formigny, where they were attacked by the Earl of Clermont who, supported by the Constable Richemont from St Lo,

won a great victory. Soon afterwards Matthew Gough was compelled to surrender Bayeux to General Dunois, who allowed honourable terms of capitulation to the English garrison of 900 men. Kyriel's object had been to strengthen the garrison at Caen. In the accomplishment of this object the English general entirely failed, and thus ended the English occupation of Normandy in the fifteenth century.

In 1485 Francis II., Duke of Brittany, overran the Bessin and occupied Bayeux, but Louis XI. soon afterwards retook the town, and firmly established the royal authority throughout the entire district. Yet in the fifteenth century the gentry of the Bessin were often turbulent, and defied the king's justices at Bayeux.

In 1486 the Earl of Clermont founded a little chapel at Formigny, where mass could be said for the repose of the souls of the dead who had fallen in the battle: and King Louis Philippe ordered the suitable repair of this chapel while he reigned over France.

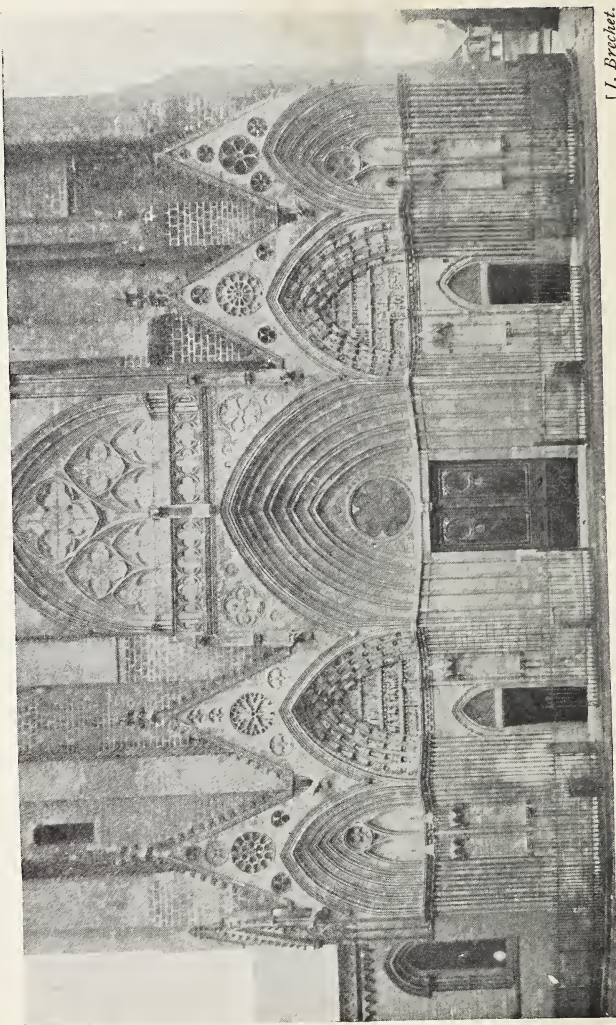
In the next century there was a violent outbreak of religious fanaticism. On May 10, 1562, the Huguenots rose *en masse*, stopped the religious services and massacred the priests whom they found in the streets. The bishop fled by sea to Picardy, and his palace was much damaged, and all the archives destroyed. The treasury of the Cathedral was pillaged, and the gold and silver, valued at 10,000 livres, melted down to be coined into money. After five years of disturbance, a pacification took place in 1567.

In the Revolution of 1789 public worship was again suspended, and the Cathedral robbed of all its property.

The Bishop and Chapter are now maintained under the famous Concordat of Napoleon, which has governed the affairs of the Church of France for the last hundred years. The diocese of Lisieux was at the same time annexed to Bayeux, and its chapter totally abolished.







[J. Brechet.

THE PORTALS OF THE WEST FRONT.

Photo.]

## CHAPTER II.

### THE EXTERIOR.

THE position and surroundings of Bayeux Cathedral are delightful.

From a distance the western spires and central *flèche*, and the long line of the roof of the nave and choir stand out well above the tops of all the houses in the town, and bestow a special character upon all the views of the city which can be obtained from the surrounding country. One is reminded of Professor Froude's striking description of the mediaeval city, crowned by the lofty towers and pointed pinnacles of the cathedral church, and of his explanation of the way in which their architectural relationship illustrates the mediaeval connection between church and state.

Speaking of the prevailing sentiments in the middle ages, the learned Professor observes: "You have only to look from a distance at any old-fashioned cathedral city, and you will see in a moment the mediaeval relations between Church and State. The Cathedral is the city. The first object you catch sight of as you approach is the spire tapering into the sky, or the huge towers holding possession of the centre of the landscape—majestically beautiful—imposing by mere size amidst the large forms of Nature herself. As you go nearer the vastness of the building impresses you more and more. The puny dwelling-places of the citizens creep at its feet, the pinnacles are glittering in the tints of the sunset, when down below among the streets and lanes the twilight is darkening. And even now, when the towns are thrice their ancient size . . . the Cathedral is still the governing form in the picture, the one object which possesses the imagination, and refuses to be eclipsed.

“As that Cathedral was to the old town, so was the church of the middle ages to the secular institutions of the world. Its



*Photo.]*

THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE EAST.

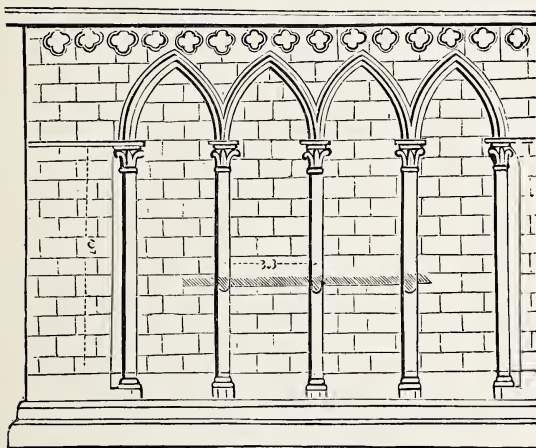
*[J. Brechet.*

very neighbourhood was sacred ; its shadow, like the shadow of the Apostles, was a sanctuary.”

Moreover, the nearer view of the Cathedral is also charming.



Instead of being surrounded by mean and paltry shops on every side, as is sometimes the case in France, this noble example of ecclesiastical art and architecture is for the most part entirely clear of small and unworthy buildings. Especially is this the case on the south-eastern side, and so it comes to pass that from this point the best view of the entire church can be obtained. In fact the view from the south-east is superb. Here the elegant termination of the choir with the graceful flying buttresses at once arrests attention. Particularly light and beautiful are the



EXTERIOR WALL-ARCADE OF THE CHOIR.

From De Caumont, "Stat. Mon. de Calvados."

two turrets with their sides of open tracery, and the pinnacle above. On a level, however, with these pinnaced buttresses at the eastern termination of the **Choir**, there are the tops of buttresses without pinnacles, roofed with slates, at the eastern termination of the aisles. Did the original plan of the skilful designer in the thirteenth century intend these buttress tops thus to remain, or were graceful pinnacles with open work intended to be added here also?

In this part of the great structure the lofty niches in the face of the buttresses still retain their statues, and at the eastern extremity of the church, immediately above the Lady Chapel

on either side of the termination of the choir, there is very appropriately sculptured the Blessed Virgin and Holy Child; then passing westwards a bishop at once appears, then other bishops and various saints, until the mighty transepts are reached with their huge windows and elaborate tracery, and lofty roof soaring up towards heaven. A striking feature, well worthy of notice throughout this eastern portion of the great church, is the delicate thirteenth-century arcading with slender shafts and well-carved capitals which decorates the flat surface of the lower part of the ancient walls. (See p. 13.)

In marked contrast to this delightful decoration, stands out boldly the great window of the **South Transept**, rich in ornate tracery, of such vast proportion as at once to arrest attention, and to strike the imagination of the beholder. Immediately beneath this noble window there is a thirteenth-century doorway of excellent design, rich in well-executed sculpture, known as the Dean's Entrance.

In fact, we may truly say that the cutting of the foliage and the figures in the arch of this transept doorway is one of the most charming features of the Cathedral. One entrance gateway alone surpasses it in artistic merit, and that is the great western portal.<sup>1</sup> The balustrade above is perhaps a little heavy, and seems to be of somewhat later date, yet on the other hand the large pinnacles in open work, and the decorated gable which surmounts the transept with little gables immediately below, are decidedly graceful and attractive. Taken as a whole the south transept is a noble feature of this church. Observe also the fine proportion of the two large windows on the northern and southern sides of this transept.

Westwards the nave appears with its large clerestory windows, and strong buttresses, unlike those of the choir, in two parallel series, each pair being connected by slender flying buttresses, which carry the thrust from the vaulted roof to the outer supports. In the upper part of these buttresses there are carved niches for statues which are empty. Each buttress is surmounted by a graceful pinnacle.

<sup>1</sup> The subject of the sculpture is the life and death of St. Thomas of Canterbury, that great champion of the spiritual power. Within six miles was situated the old castle or rather hunting-box of the Duke of Normandy, named Bur-le-Roi, and here they say King Henry II. uttered those famous words which incited his followers to murder the archbishop, while it was in the town that the king received the legates of Alexander III. in 1169.



*Photo.]*

THE SOUTH TRANSEPT AND WESTERN SPIRES.

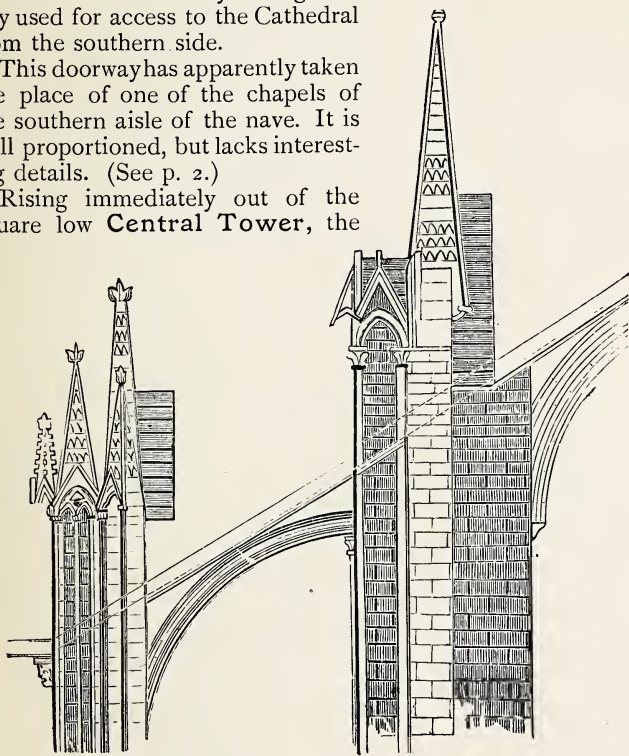
*[J. Brechet.*



The gabled windows of the lower storey with their fine open tracery give light to the various chapels of the southern side of the nave, which were completed at a later date than the nave itself. Near the middle of the line of these chapels stands the double arched doorway now generally used for access to the Cathedral from the southern side.

This doorway has apparently taken the place of one of the chapels of the southern aisle of the nave. It is well proportioned, but lacks interesting details. (See p. 2.)

Rising immediately out of the square low **Central Tower**, the



FLYING BUTTRESS—NAVE.

From De Caumont's "Stat. Mon."

lofty cupola and flèche crown the entire sacred edifice. From this point of view, excellent as it is, no one would dream that Bayeux was in any sense a Norman Cathedral. You see almost entirely thirteenth-century work, as good of its kind as you will



see anywhere in France. Yet not all thirteenth-century work, for the present cupola and flèche were added in the nineteenth century, and form the least satisfactory part of the Cathedral from an architectural point of view. (See p. 12.)

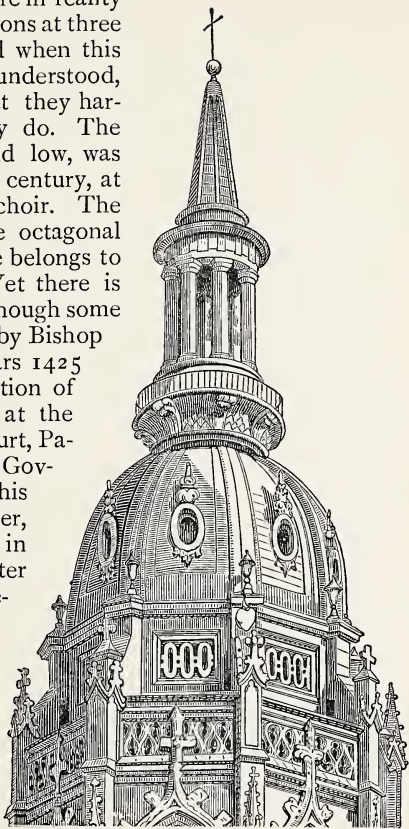
Owing to serious subsidence in the piers, the central tower was in part rebuilt about 1846, and the entire upper portion reconstructed above the line of the series of windows which rise directly from the square base erected in the thirteenth century. The nineteenth-century work, therefore, consists of a flèche, a cupola, and one series of windows, designed to correspond with the earlier series of windows immediately below. Yet the actual result has been well described as "a poor specimen of the Flamboyant style," and is, as a matter of fact, altogether out of keeping with the general character of the rest of this noble church. The summit of the flèche, however, reaches the height of 240 feet, and the uppermost gallery commands a fine view of the surrounding country. M. Crétin was the architect. Perhaps it would have been wiser if this cupola and flèche had been altogether omitted in 1846, and one tier of masonry alone added to the tower, something after the plan of St. Ouen at Rouen. Little is really gained by the great height of the flèche, and traceried stonework would have been far more in keeping with the general design of the Cathedral.

This central tower contains a clock which strikes every quarter of an hour, and also a fine peal of bells.

It is interesting to note that an earlier cupola had been erected above the low central tower in 1714 by Bishop Francis de Nesmond, of which no trace now exists. This remarkable structure, as Dawson Turner declares in his "Tour in Normandy," published in 1820, "was wretchedly at variance with the other parts of the building." He hardly knows whether it were Grecian or Gothic: but "whichever style it may be termed, it is a bad specimen of either." Yet such was the condition of architectural taste in the eighteenth century, that it was praised by the Maréchal de Vauban, and the celebrated architect Moussard is credited with the design.

At the termination of the nave the fine twelfth-century spires spring from the massive **Western Towers**. Their simple and chaste outline, and the soft colour of the stone, give a grand effect to this end of the church, which is in every respect worthy and appropriate.

All the three towers were in reality constructed in three sections at three very different dates, and when this curious fact is clearly understood, surprise will be felt that they harmonize as well as they do. The central tower, square and low, was erected in the thirteenth century, at the same time as the choir. The carved stonework of the octagonal storey immediately above belongs to the fifteenth century. Yet there is every reason to believe, though some works were commenced by Bishop Nicolas Habart in the years 1425 and 1427, that this portion of the tower was erected at the expense of Bishop Harcourt, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Governor of Normandy, for his letter dated 26 September, 1477, has been preserved in which he offers the Chapter to provide for the completion of the tower "*depuis longtemps imparfaite*," and two years later pays a bill of 4,092 livres or French francs. The upper portion of this structure, surmounted by a figure of St. Michael, was burnt in February, 1676. The present cupola and flèche, as an original design, and not a restoration, were erected when Louis Philippe was King of the French.



BISHOP NESMOND'S CUPOLA.

From De Caumont's "Stat. Mon."

So too in regard to the western towers. The massive, not to say, cyclopean foundations may be referred to the stirring days of Bishop Odo's episcopate. Perhaps the lowest storey may also

be referred to the same date, while it is certain that the great towers themselves together with their graceful spires must have been completed well before the time when the English king gave up his title of Norman duke in the year 1206, and may therefore be considered as twelfth-century work. It was, however, in the thirteenth century that the five very beautiful porches or doorways were added to the rude surface of the older structure. A practised eye can easily detect in the rough masonry the precise points where the stonework of the different periods join, though for the most part these joints are so skilfully contrived as to escape general observation.

The **West Front**, then, of this great church, as we now see it, is both peculiar and remarkable. The great towers with their thick walls and massive stonework bestow a special character of their own upon the entire façade, suggesting the idea of a fortress as well as a church, recalling to the mind in a strange way King William the Conqueror's own work at the western front of the Abbaye aux hommes at Caen, the proud place of his own sepulture. And the resemblance must have been still closer before the time when the beautiful arcading of the five porches was added.

On two of the tympanums of the arches of these porches the sculptures yet remain, arranged in four rows one above the other. On the doorway towards the south the sculptor has represented the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgement. On the north he has chosen, as the subject of his art, the life of Jesus Christ. Higher up on this western façade are found the carved effigies of ten bishops.

On the solid face of the towers both round and pointed windows are found, and these alternate in an odd and unexpected way. This uncommon alternation increases the difficulty of fixing the precise date of the upper masonry. We may, however, fairly surmise that the massive basements were constructed about the year 1070, the main portion of the towers about 1150, and the spires which surmount them about 1190. These lofty spires soar high above the main roof, and reach the height of 230 feet. They possess all the artistic merit commonly found in the best examples of the first period of Gothic architecture. The southern tower is a few feet the higher.

Examine carefully the very delicate carving of the ornamental foliage found in the thirteenth-century arcading at the lowest



storey of the western façade, and notice how the arches of the porches intentionally alternate in a rich and a simple design. In the two outer porches empty niches are found instead of doorways; in the next two, both a door and a niche, with rich sculpture; while the central archway is plain and simple. Similar rich carving is found in the doorway of the south transept.

The **North Transept** seems to have been completed in the second half of the fourteenth century, and is less interesting than the southern transept. This northern side is less ornamental than the other portions of the church, and the view is broken by a quite new sacristy of poor design, and another very ugly building;<sup>1</sup> while across a small enclosure<sup>2</sup> stands part of the Hotel de Ville, the law courts and a prison once part of the palace of the lordly bishops of Bayeux! If the ghost of Odo now walked the earth, and were to visit the town of the departed bishop's earthly triumphs, how astonished would he be to see, not priests passing to and fro in meek attendance on some lordly prelate, but miserable men in durance vile working out their appointed tasks in the hopelessness of blank despair! Yet the episcopal chapel, decorated in the style of the Renaissance still exists, and is used as the chamber of the civil tribunal.

Besides certain vaults and arched chambers, constructed in the twelfth century, and formerly used by the Official of the bishop, this small chapel is the only portion of the ancient palace, which remains in this twentieth century. Bishop Louis de Canossa, an Italian by birth, spent a considerable sum of money on this chapel, and Bishop Bernardin S. François carried on his predecessor's work in the Italian style. Bishop Angennes added the fine wooden ceiling in 1640.

The bishop now occupies a large house on the opposite (or south) side of the Cathedral, which was the Deanery down to the time of the Revolution, and was given to Dean Stephen by Bishop Henry in 1189. Though spacious enough for modern requirements, and twentieth-century notions of ecclesiastical needs, it would hardly have suited the princely ideas of the bishops of Bayeux in the earlier ages.

Be sure to notice, nearly opposite the old Deanery, just at the point where the public highway passes close under the south-

<sup>1</sup> This building is now used as the museum of the Cathedral.

<sup>2</sup> Note the modern statue of the great antiquary A. de Caumont.

west tower something very human that occupies a little niche just over the heads of the foot passengers. A woman graven in the hard white stone stands there with her prayer-book in her hand, and whether you see her or not, watches those who turn in towards the five-gated house of prayer. Probably most people see her not. When you have seen her, then go round to the other end of this same western façade, note on the lower slope of the spire just above the top of the tower a curious projection, hanging as it were in mid-air, just at the point where the spiral staircase terminates. What is it? Why is it placed there? There is nothing like it on the other tower. It is the look-out. Here the watchman could see the rapid approach of coming danger, the armed troops of the foe, the nature and the line of attack. In the Hundred Years' War how often must the watchman have given his quick warning to the people of the town 200 feet below, when the English landed on the coast, five miles away, and began to ravage the fair fields and green pastures of Normandy! How active must the watchman of Bayeux have been on April 15, 1450, when the well-equipped army of the King of France won the important battle of Formigny, a village not far from the town, and finally drove the English troops from the soil of western France! In the small museum of the town, at the Hotel de Ville, you may examine, if you will, a coat of chain armour taken from some ill-fated warrior on the English side on that fateful day!

Yet stay a moment, and reflect! Contrast the stone lady calm and still with her prayer-book by the church door, and the terrible scenes of bloodshed witnessed on occasion from that quaint look-out, and the sharp call to arms issued therefrom; and you have the two main factors of human life—the fierce warfare of political passion, the calm repose of true religion. It is an old question ever new:—Has religion the power as well as the will to calm and soothe the excited passions of mankind? In days of old men seem to have thought that the solemn beauty, the almost stern repose, the dim religious light, of the vast Cathedral church might play some small part at least in the effectual accomplishment of this lofty purpose.

But however that may be, whatever credit you may be disposed to give to the soft influences of religion, there is one certain fate that awaits all mankind. Turn sharply, and face due south while still in the quaint little square at the west end of the

great Cathedral, and you will see some little cottages—not much in themselves to gaze upon—nothing particular to catch the cultured eye; but lo! out of the battered roof of one of these selfsame cottages there rises an odd little stone structure with a peaked roof, and a complete series of narrow apertures in well-cut stone. What is this odd-looking turret-like little thing? Can it be an old chimney from some nobler edifice of days gone by that has somehow got into this strange position? Are those narrow apertures to let the black smoke escape? No! It is nothing of that kind.

The **Lanterne des Morts** was put to a sacred use in the Middle Ages. Here a light was ever kept burning in those olden days, when the grim hand of Death had laid low some worthy citizen, and all men might know his spirit had departed hence. Perchance they fancied that little light might help to guide his way to that other land; though some more prosaic authorities think the light only guided the steps of the living amongst the tombs. The Lanterne des Morts is certainly a graceful little structure, in a very peculiar



Photo.]

[Mon. Hist.

LA LANTERNE DES MORTS.

position, well worthy some few minutes' serious attention by every visitor to Bayeux.

The ground on the south side of the Cathedral, in part now used as a road, was in ancient days the cemetery of St. Sauveur, and this remarkable shaft surrounded by more modern houses goes back to that early time. By a deed dated September 18, 1676, the Vicar of St. Sauveur surrenders to the Chapter his rights in this cemetery and the chapel of St. Stephen.

The Cathedral is dedicated to St. Mary, a favourite dedication for Norman churches as the mediaeval rhyme testifies:

Saint Martin, Saint Marie,  
Se partaigent Normandie.

The Chapter once possessed eleven dignitaries, besides the grand penitentiary, and forty-nine canons and prebends, as well as an extensive jurisdiction over the city. The dean was entitled a prelate, and exercised judicial authority, and there was a chapel in the deanery, dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury.







*N. D. Photo.]*

THE NAVE, LOOKING EAST.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE INTERIOR.

ENTER the church by the great west doorway and the magnificent view of the whole interior at once arrests attention and completely captivates the natural sense of beauty more or less possessed by every man.

Pause a minute, therefore, on the raised platform of stonework by the door beneath the great west towers before descending the six steps to the actual level of the nave. The general effect, obtained at this point of view, is in reality the most striking feature about the Cathedral of Bayeux. No ponderous screen, whether ugly or beautiful, obstructs the unfettered vision of the outstretched pavement, and the eye can gaze with calm delight on the sculptured stone and storied tracery, and take in without unseemly interruption the grand harmony of proportion, and the high perfection of artistic skill, which is so plainly manifested throughout the entire building. No shaft or column is out of place. No window or vaulting is out of proportion. No unsuitable baldacchino mars the artistic effect of the lovely arcading beyond and above the high altar. No gaudy colouring conceals the natural beauty of the native stone, so soft and pleasing to the cultured eye.

In all these respects the charming interior of Bayeux conveys a much-needed lesson and a timely warning to all true students of architecture of whatever nationality. As the Abbé Bourassé has well remarked, "*Quand on entre pour la première fois dans la basilique de Bayeux, on éprouve un saisissement secret et solennel, inspiré par les proportions graves et par l'ordonnance majestueuse de l'edifice.*" Long must one gaze, whether in bright sunlight or in dull shade, on the varied tints created by the driven storm-cloud, or the delicate reflections of fine weather, to see all the rich beauty of the varied rays of light that fall from the southern windows athwart the broad



church upon those richly sculptured arcades of the nave and the choir. Long must one gaze before even the practised eye can fully realize all the marvellous wealth of imagery, all the grotesque detail of sculpture, which is so close at hand, and is yet but half revealed under a cursory inspection of the mighty edifice.

Thus the six great Norman arches of the **Nave** need careful examination. How rich is their workmanship! How exquisite is their design! Built about the year 1160, to every traveller well acquainted with cathedral architecture, they recall at the first glance the lovely nave of St. David's Cathedral in South Wales. There is the unmistakable strength of the Norman builder, with the true ring about it, but there is also an elegance of finish, a delicate lightness of sculptured surface, not always found in the stern mind of the Norman architect. This gentler effect is undoubtedly in part due to the diaper work which is found between the bold round arches. Moreover, in this diaper work there is the most extraordinary variety. There are curves and angles, squares and oblongs, in queer profusion. Yet there is symmetry as well; and the clearly-defined line of the arches and the string course are never broken, nor the true sense of proportion marred. The usual Norman patterns occur, not senselessly repeated, but in ingenious variety. One arch on the south side of the nave has a vast number of odd human faces, mostly with their tongues out. Some possess long upright ears; and one is very like a rabbit, and can hardly be meant for even a caricature of a man.

Between the two easternmost arches on this same south side Earl Harold appears in the act of taking his fateful oath to William, Duke of Normandy. But these last-mentioned figures are quite modern sculpture. The curious panels, however, between the Norman arches further westwards are for the most part ancient. Here may be seen strange lions and dragons; odd beasts, the quaint embodiment of mediaeval fancy. One of these beasts has successfully achieved the difficult task of biting his own tail, and seems well pleased with his success at this curious game. Moreover, on another panel, two monks appear in deep converse. They have evidently just received some important piece of news, and do not quite know what to make of it.

On the opposite (or northern) side near the present pulpit is

an old bishop giving his blessing to the faithful. Be sure to notice the bishop's feet, or rather his toes! Nearer to the pulpit is a strange kind of lion vainly trying to bite his own tail; but in that vain effort he displays wondrous energy. Immediately above this peculiar animal is a knowing-looking bird pecking at her wing, or perhaps the concealed body of a snake, with her sharp claw grasping an odd little head nearly all eyes. Has the bird a kind of serpent's body, or is this connected with the odd little head? If this be the case, then the bird is evidently trying to kill the snake with the powerful aid both of a sharp beak and strong claw. Possibly this uncommon symbol may be intended to represent the Church, under the guise of a bird, overcoming the spirit of evil. The swollen eyes of the demon are half starting out of his little head with fright and alarm. Altogether this piece of sculpture is remarkable in design as well as exceedingly well executed.

In the next panel, let into the diaper work between the Norman arches, we find another ecclesiastic, giving his benediction to the whole company of faithful people seated below. Be sure to notice his tiny little toes! If he be a bishop, as is most probable, then some malicious person has broken his crosier in half, and only the top piece remains perfect. Yet, to say the truth, malicious persons are found all over the world, and there is decidedly a character of that sort in the westernmost sculptured panel, who is very furtively whispering something to a weary soldier resting his foot on the base of a pillar below. The symbol contained in this particular panel is extremely



Photo.]

[Mon. Hist.

CARVED PANEL ON NORTH SIDE.

curious, and well worthy of special attention. We interpret it in the following manner. The devil in the disguise of a monkey with a face suggestive of a quick and lively intelligence is resting on the top of a pillar with an iron chain round his neck, and is apparently saying something uncanny to the brave

warrior, who has the other end of the chain in his left hand, and holds up the fore-finger of his right hand as a warning to the evil spirit to desist. Be sure to notice the peculiar expression of both the faces, well carved in the hard stone. If the perplexed soldier has enchained the demon, yet his difficulties and trials are by no means over. The demon by dint of subtlety is still trying to get the upper hand. Does the soldier's face suggest that he has some chance of success? On being shown the photographic reproduction of this quaint panel, that learned and distinguished archaeologist, Professor Cav. Raffaele Faccioli, sometime director of the Royal Commission for the Preservation of the Historic Monu-



*Photo.]*

*[Mon. Hist.*

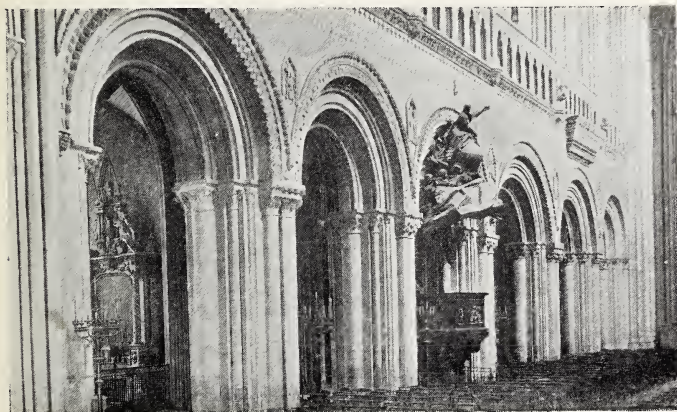
CARVED PANEL NEAR WEST END.

ments of Aemilia, in north-eastern Italy, at once said, "This monster on the pillar is certainly the devil, disguised in the form of a monkey, trying to tempt the warrior below. Can there be any indirect allusion to the wars between England and France?"

It were easy but unwise to let the imagination run riot over this the most curious piece of sculptured symbolism in the

Cathedral of Bayeux. We will, however, only further say, let no one pass it by unnoticed on account of its small size and great height above the main floor of the nave. Though occupying but little space, these early sculptures at Bayeux are amongst the greatest curiosities in the church, and it has been thought well to draw particular attention to them.

It is more than probable, in fact it is almost certain, that some of the diaper work between the arches, into which they are inserted, came from the more ancient church erected by order of Bishop Odo. Moreover, the plan of working beautifully



*Photo.]*

*[J. Brechet.*

THE NAVE: NORTH ARCADE AND PULPIT.

diapered patterns on the flat surface of the wall is a species of treatment by no means uncommon in Normandy. Immediately above these runs a low trefoiled arcade (apparently of later date) as an effective balustrade to the clerestory, which rises without a triforium, in all its beauty and charm straight from the top of the massive Norman arcading. This early Gothic work, belonging to the twelfth century, is very chaste and lovely, and forms a charming contrast in its lightness and elegance to the heavy Norman work underneath. The two great styles of French Christian architecture are here blended together with consummate skill, in a way not offensive, but very pleasing to the eye.



The various **Chapels** in the nave, for the most part of good design, but uninteresting in themselves, are not so old as the original structure, but were built at different dates, as useful as well as ornamental additions to the main body of the church. Thus the chapels of St. John the Evangelist and the Annunciation on the north side were built by Peter de Benais about the year 1289. The chapel of St. Martin was constructed in 1309, and the other northern chapels were completed before the year 1356.

In one of these chapels there is a sort of gallery, with a vaulted chamber beneath, and a good stone staircase for access. It is from this particular gallery that the best view of the noble crossing and the southern arcading of the choir is obtained. Here—in the front seats of this gallery—you can best realize the wondrous charm of arch surmounting arch, and capital above capital, mounting heavenward. How highly artistic are those exquisite shafts of soft-coloured stone that stretch away towards the sky! If the day be fine, and the sun shines brightly, how lovely is the rich flood of light that descends from above on the rich sumptuousness of sculpture below! The **Pulpit** is a fine specimen of eighteenth-century carving, a little heavy in design. The design was the work of M. Largilliers of Caen, and was executed in 1786. M. Maugin of Bayeux was the carver.

Of the various chapels on the south side of the nave, two were either built or rebuilt in the fifteenth century, and the remainder belong to the thirteenth century. One of these chapels is believed to have been founded by Odo de Lorris, or Eudes, Bishop of Bayeux, who died in 1274.

Near the west end of the northern aisle there is a fine modern statue of St. Peter by H. Dupont. Under the west towers, on either side of the principal doorway, are two tombs of early bishops. One is the tomb of Bishop Richard II. and the other Bishop Philip Harcourt, both of whom occupied the See in the twelfth century. The stone screen which once existed between the nave and the crossing was destroyed by the Huguenots, and another of classical design, erected in 1676, was happily removed in 1851.

In the museum of the Cathedral, which is not usually accessible to the public, is preserved a very curious capital, of the same early date as the capitals found in the crypt. It was sculptured in the eleventh or perhaps the tenth century. Perhaps

it crowned a pillar of the crossing in Bishop Odo's time, and perhaps the shafts of the present pillars were erected in Norman times, and cut away to their present dimensions in the thirteenth century to suit the prevalent taste for Gothic art. However that may be, the capital, though much broken, is in itself extremely noteworthy. It presents a figure of the Father Eternal, with a double nimbus or glory; and on another side a divine person, with his head surrounded by a nimbus, probably Jesus Christ.

The **Transepts** are fine and spacious, the width just exceeding 100 ft., and the magnificent window on the southern side is well worthy of attention. The greater height of the floor under the crossing enabled the choir stalls to be brought down to the first pier of the nave in mediaeval times.

Now we must pass on eastwards.

The present **Choir** and the arches of the crossing are Gothic, in very good style, of the first period. They were erected by Bishop Henry de Beaumont or Henry of Salisbury, an Englishman, who died in 1205, and Robert des Ablêges, Henry's immediate successor in the bishopric of Bayeux, who went with St. Louis to the Crusades, and died in 1231. Though of Norman origin, the existing church is largely Gothic in style, and presents the unusual feature of an exceptionally high **Triforium** in proportion to the height of the clerestory windows throughout the well-proportioned choir, ornamented with a particularly charming arcade. In very marked contrast the nave has no constructive triforium. That learned antiquary, M. de Caumont, remarks concerning the choir



*Photo.]*

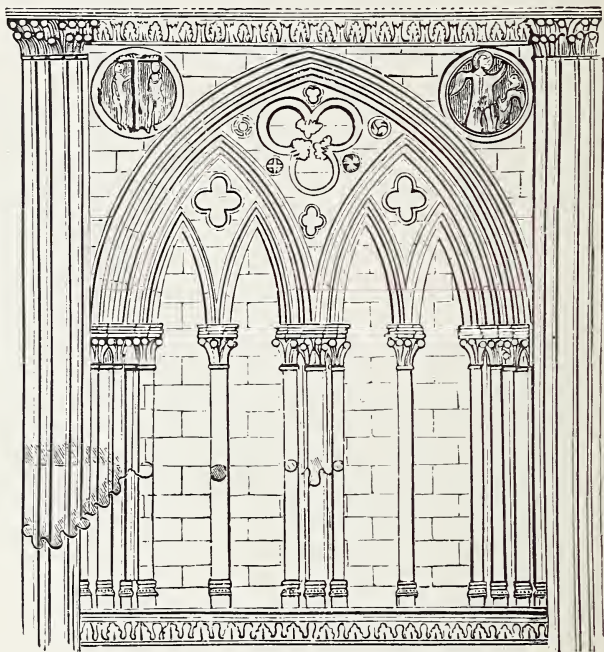
*[Mon. Hist.*

CAPITAL NOW PRESERVED IN  
THE MUSEUM.

L'ornementation est hardie, gracieuse et d'un bel effect. Par une disposition unique, les arcades du triforium sont disposées au nombre de quatre, sous une plus grande ogive qui les encadre. Cette réunion de quatre ogives

en lancettes sous une grande ogive, résulte du rapprochement de deux lancettes géminées surmontées d'un trèfle et encadrées dans deux ogives. Cette disposition est fort rare.

Owing, however, to the sloping external roof of the aisles of the choir, which run right round the apse, this triforium is

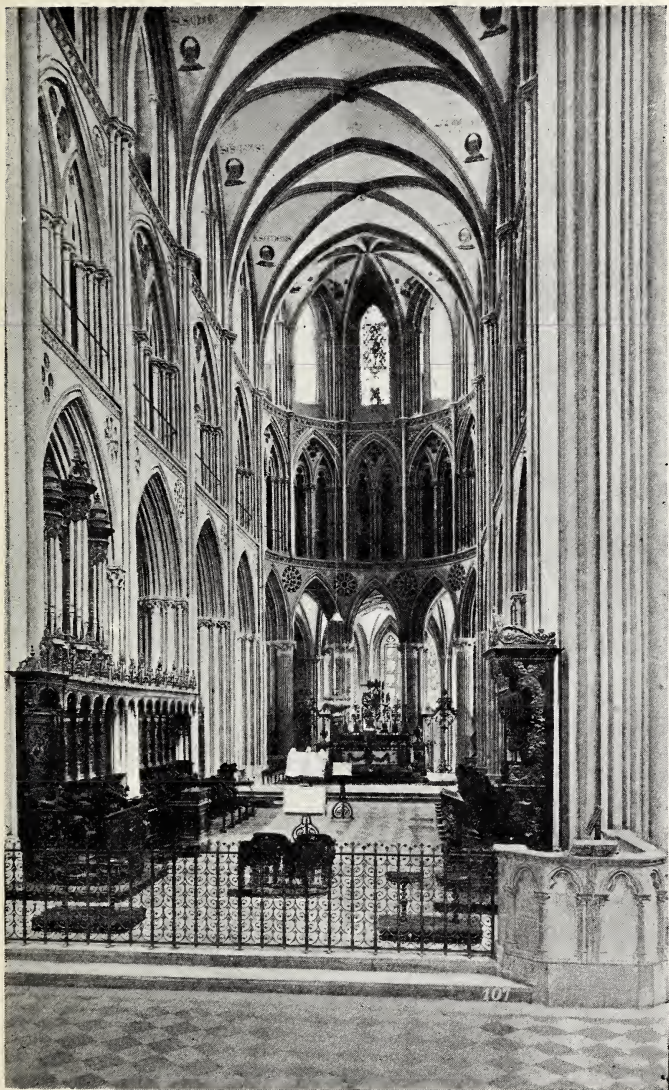


ELEVATION OF THE CHOIR TRIFORIUM.

From De Caumont.

not, and cannot be, glazed externally as is the case at Beauvais and St. Ouen at Rouen, and so a possible opportunity for giving additional elegance and lightness to the design has been let slip by the original architect. He has just let us have something to say by way of criticism in the midst of so much perfection and real nobility.



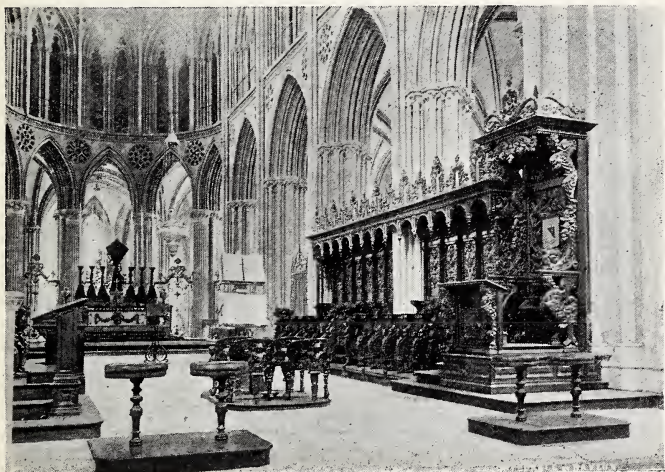


*N. D. Photo.]*

THE CHOIR.



In examining the choir, no one can fail to notice the circular panels of tracery in the spandrels of the arches. The curious patterns show much variety, and the ornaments themselves have a pleasing, not to say fanciful, effect. Whether there be any touch of eastern character about them, as some authorities have suggested, is extremely doubtful. They probably represent the exuberant fancy of the designer of the rest of the choir. Behind the high altar, however, are four fluted columns, quite unlike the rest of the columns in the choir. On the roof will be found



[Photo.]

*J. Brechet.*

THE CHOIR: SOUTH SIDE.

imaginary portraits of the first twenty-one bishops of Bayeux with their names affixed.<sup>1</sup>

The choir stalls<sup>2</sup> are late, but of good workmanship, and possess the great merit of in no way obstructing the general view of the

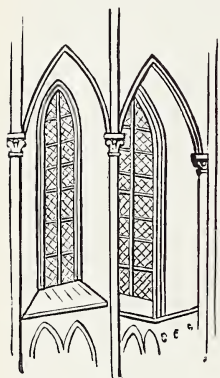
<sup>1</sup> There are also found the names of Peter and William. Possibly these are the names of thirteenth-century builders who took part in the construction of this part of the church.

<sup>2</sup> The sculpture of these wooden seats represents a fine type of renaissance work, and is attributed to J. Lefebvre of Caen.

church, whose total length is 310 feet, and the height 75 feet. Bayeux is therefore by no means one of the largest or most magnificent cathedrals of France.

The **Chapel** of the two brothers named **Talentis** next deserves attention. This very beautiful chapel, now under repair, was completed in the year 1478, and is situated on the south side of the Cathedral, just east of the crossing. The fine arrangement of the arcading in this chapel should be especially noticed. In each of the windows, the double arch, and the slender shaft of the column projected forward is pretty and effective, as well as rare and uncommon. Thereby both a variety of light and

shade, as well as a pleasing impression of lightness of style is happily obtained. Something of the same kind may be noticed in the great south window of the transept, where a slender shaft soars upward, crowned by a bishop, in full pontifical robes, just in the centre of the window aforesaid. Yet, if you pass from the central point of view to the side, then it will clearly appear that this shaft that looks so slender is in reality joined by good masonry to the rich tracery of the large south transept window; so that the one serves to strengthen the other. The origin of the chapel above mentioned is interesting. Two brothers, Roland and Antonio de Talentis, travelled together from the sunny Milanese territory, whence they sprang, in the warm plain of Lombardy, and coming to Bayeux were



WINDOW OF A CHAPEL  
IN CHOIR.

De Caumont, ("Stat.  
Mon.")

both appointed canons in that Cathedral Chapter. At their joint expense this beautiful chapel was erected in honour of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and when their days of earthly service in their Cathedral were accomplished they were both buried in the same grave, in this very chapel, which they had themselves erected in their lifetime, and had loved to dedicate to God's honour and service.

The **Lady Chapel** is situated in the usual place, at the extreme east end of the church, and is of the same date and architectural style as the choir. It is not so large as in many other French cathedrals, but very well proportioned, and exactly



fits into its place as an integral portion of the general design of the eastern part of the church.

The positive proof of this statement lies in the fact that if you go to the centre of the choir near the crossing, and look due eastwards, you can see the eastern window of the Lady Chapel over the high altar, between the two most eastern pillars of the choir.

The Lady Chapel, therefore, is not in any sense an after-thought, a later addition, as is not unfrequently the case in a great mediaeval church. For it often happened that when the general plan had been with much labour and care brought to completion after long years, yet the keen desire for further building was not entirely exhausted. Then a Lady Chapel of considerable size was frequently thrown out beyond the original eastern termination of the sacred edifice. This Lady Chapel was generally a beautiful work of art in itself, but no part of the original ground-plan of the church. Such is the character of the charming Lady Chapel at Lisieux in Normandy, and at Hereford in England. There is nothing of this kind at Bayeux.

The southern chapel of the choir next to the Lady Chapel, has two large frescoes of St. Eloys and St. Robert, well executed. In another chapel hard by is a very curious picture painted on the wall, representing the painful torments of the souls in hell. No description can be as vivid as the actual sight thereof. Yet the vividness is surpassed by such a fresco as is found on the cloister wall of the Campo Santo, or cemetery of Pisa in Tuscany, painted under the powerful influence of such ideas as gave to the world Dante's "Inferno."

As in very many mediaeval cathedrals, the extraordinary ceremony of the annual election of a boy bishop, invested with authority for one brief day, was observed at Bayeux. At the solemn time of vespers, when the Dean and Canons were all assembled in the choir, and the singers had reached the words in the Magnificat, "*Deposuit potentes de sede*"—"He hath put down the mighty from their seat"—then all of a sudden a change of position took place, the Dean descended from his stall and the Canons left their appointed seats, and the little boy bishop, arrayed in full canonicals, came forward, and was enthroned in the mighty Bishop's chair—just for one short day. It was an odd custom, yet carried out with much ceremonial in this fine

Cathedral church. For in an old inventory we read that there was preserved in the vestry in ancient days:

Two mitres for the boy bishop,  
One crosier belonging to the boy bishop,  
The boy bishop's mittens,  
Four copes of scarlet satin for the use of the singing boys on Innocents' Day.

Moreover in the accounts of the Abbess of the Holy Trinity, Caen, for the year 1546, there is this curious entry:

Au petit évêque de Bayeux, pour sa pension, ainsi qu'il est accoutumé.  
V sous.

By way of conclusion to the account of the interior of the church, a strange legend of the middle ages concerning the choir must now be mentioned. Mediaeval churches often have their peculiar legends, not unfrequently connected with the devil; there is such a legend at Bayeux.

Once upon a time, so the story goes, some very wicked Canons of Bayeux attempted to murder their Bishop; and, by way of penance for this abominable conduct, the Chapter was compelled to send annually a Canon to Rome, there to sing the epistle at the midnight mass on Christmas Eve. The journey was long, the expense great, and the Alpine cold terrible. Odd stories were told of the perils of the way, and the great danger of the high passes in the Alps during the winter season. Each Canon, therefore, tried his very best to avoid this troublesome and vexatious duty, however eager he might be at a more convenient season to visit the threshold of the Apostles, and see the wondrous sights of the Eternal City.

When, however, in the due course of events, the turn happened to fall to John Patye, Canon and Prebendary of Cambremer, he took the matter very lightly; and to the great surprise and astonishment of the Chapter, showed no anxiety at all about the long and dangerous journey which he was in the fulfilment of his duty bound to undertake. Time passed on, and it seemed quite impossible for him to reach Rome by Christmas Eve. His brother Canons were full of reproaches, and uttered dreadful warnings of the evil to come, and the terrible wrath of Rome. Then it was that our Canon John muttered his mystic spell, mounted without the least hesitation or fear on the back of the demon, and found himself in the Papal capital in the twinkling

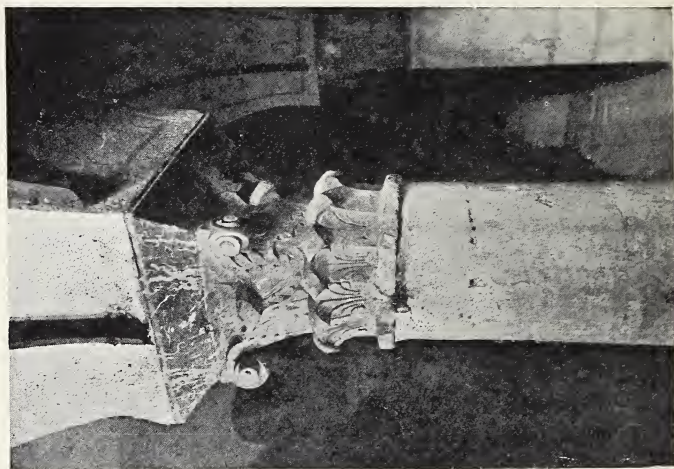
of an eye. He sang the epistle, as in duty bound, at the midnight mass, and was so pleased with this remarkable exploit, that, with the effective help of the demon, he made his way into the sacred precincts of the Vatican Palace, and there destroyed the hated document in the Papal archives which bound the Chapter of Bayeux to this unpleasant obligation. This great feat accomplished, he promptly mounted his demon again, and was carried back to his cathedral city in no time! Unspeakable joy pervaded the Chapter on hearing of his safe arrival, and he was received with a perfect ovation by his ecclesiastical brethren. No more Canons of Bayeux were compelled to attend the midnight mass on Christmas Eve in the City of Rome!

On the journey to and fro, as Canon John avers, the imp had beguiled him, perhaps to mislead him, or perhaps to amuse him, with the following very remarkable lines, which have the very uncommon merit of reading the same either backwards or forwards, though the sense is rather obscure:

*Signa, te, signa temere me tangis et angis  
Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.*

Canon John Patye died in the year 1540—we believe in the odour of sanctity—and was reverently buried in his cathedral church.





[*Mon. Hist.*



*Photo.*]

CAPITALS IN THE CRYPT.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE CRYPT, SACRISTY AND CHAPTER HOUSE.

THE crypt of Bayeux is important. It is the oldest portion of the existing church. All antiquaries place it as far back as the stirring days of Bishop Odo. Some authorities attribute it to Bishop Hugh, who was consecrated in the year 1015. It is certainly very early Norman work. Just a word as to its position. Since the crypt is under the centre of the choir, which was erected in the early years of the thirteenth century, and the massive foundations of the great western towers are evidently of early Norman origin, it follows of necessity that Bishop Odo's church cannot have been much smaller in size than the present Cathedral: for if it had been smaller, as might reasonably have been expected, then either the crypt would be further west, or the foundations of the great towers further east. In this way, therefore, an approximate idea can be formed as to the actual dimensions of Bishop Odo's building.

In this dark and gloomy crypt, where the kindly offices of the good-humoured sacristan with a bright light are absolutely necessary, you first of all see the tombs of Bishop John de Boissy, who died in 1412, and his immediate predecessor, Bishop Nicolas de Bosc, Privy Councillor of France, and Chancellor of the Royal Exchequer, who died in Paris in 1408. It is generally believed that his body was brought to Bayeux from the French capital in 1412. For strange to relate the very existence of the crypt was unknown to the Chapter for some centuries, and its discovery in this particular year is commemorated by the following lines, which are found inscribed beside the only window which now gives light to this curious underground structure.

En l'an mil quatre cens et douze  
Tiers jours d'avril que pluye arrouse

Les biens de la terre. La journée  
 Que la Pasques fut célébrée  
 Noble homme et révérend père  
 Jehan de Boissey, de la mère  
 Eglise de Bayeux pasteur  
 Rendit l'âme à son Créateur.  
 Alors en foissant la place  
 Devant le grand autel de grâce  
 Trouva la basse chapelle  
 Dont il n'avait été nouvelle  
 Où il est mis en sépulture.  
 Dieu veuille avoir son âme en cure.

Now it is in this crypt alone that you see a perfectly original work of Bishop Odo, or possibly of his immediate predecessor, quite unaltered, in no respect modernized. The rude pillars with their rude capitals, the rough masonry and the thick walls are truly quite characteristic of the days of this warrior prelate, who raised his cathedral city to its highest pitch of fame. One particular pillar on the northern side possesses a very remarkable capital, certainly as old as Bishop Odo's time. Once there were ten heads or faces incorporated in the sculpture of this capital, and those which have not been obliterated by the dire ravages of time still possess remarkable vigour in the cutting, and force of expression on their rough visages. In marked contrast all the other capitals are very plain and simple. Probably the one on the south side, near the window, is the oldest. Strange as it may appear, it is undoubtedly true that there is in the Cathedral of Modena, on the Aemilian Way in north-eastern Italy, not far from the slopes of the lofty Apennines, a capital bearing a very remarkable resemblance to this capital at Bayeux, containing human faces curiously carved, with odd and strange countenances. Now the oldest part of the existing Cathedral of Modena was erected by the famous Countess Matilda, who owned the lordship of the district now known as the Duchy of Modena, who entertained Pope Hildebrand, better known as Gregory VII., in the Castle of Canossa, and bequeathed her dominions to the Roman See. This carved capital at Bayeux is therefore of contemporary date with the carved capital at Modena. Is the curious resemblance an accidental coincidence? There is no doubt that this ancient crypt once extended further eastwards, and with the aid of a candle portions of a pillar on the north-eastern side, with a rude capital of early workmanship, may still be discerned through a

square hole in the eastern wall. This eastern portion of the crypt is situated immediately below the high altar.

There are now ten columns and twelve arches in the crypt itself. There are also rude paintings on part of the vault and walls which are much later than Bishop Odo's time, and in all probability belong to the fifteenth century. They were certainly painted after the rediscovery of the crypt in 1412. Against the north wall there is the tomb of a canon fairly well preserved, surmounted by a fresco of the canon in the act of prayer to God. The fresco on the vault above is very curious, and represents the Holy Trinity. The Father Almighty is portrayed in the form of an aged man, with a crucifix on his knees, above which is a small dove. There is no other tomb equally well preserved in this dark and gloomy crypt.

Truly no Englishman with any feeling for antiquity, or love for the early history of his own land and the heroic annals of the eleventh century, can stand there and not remember the fierce battle of Hastings, and all the stirring events of the year 1066, in which Duke William and Bishop Odo took so prominent a part. The Prelate who struck down the Saxon host with his war club on the bloody field of Senlac must have ministered here !

The old **Sacristy** of Bayeux has quite recently undergone a process of necessary repair, and the work has been carried out by skilled artisans under wise and competent direction. This structure, arranged in two stories, is situated on the east side of the northern transept, abutting on the northern aisle, and may be referred to the episcopate of Robert des Ablêges. The lower chamber has a fine roof, and pillars of the thirteenth century, and the upper contains such treasure as the Dean and the Chapters till possess in this twentieth century. For French cathedrals are generally poor in respect of their treasuries, in



[Photo.]

[Mon. Hist.]

BASE IN THE CRYPT.

marked contrast to Spain, where they are often extremely rich, possessing much gold and silver as well as works of art.

Yet the Chapter of Bayeux possesses two articles of uncommon value, whether regarded from the antiquarian or artistic standpoint. In the first place there is the ancient chasuble said to have belonged to St. Regnobert with the stole and maniple; and in the second place there is the curious casket of ivory and silver, adorned with arabesques, now used to contain the chasuble. On the surface of the casket is an inscription in eastern lettering which for a long time puzzled the French savants, but has been thus translated by M. Reinaud, member of the Institute of France: "In the name of God, full of compassion and mercy, let there be complete and universal benediction." Both these valuable and rare articles were given to the Chapter by St. Louis, King of France. The odd thing is they are both of oriental workmanship, of a type quite unusual in the west. Nor does it precisely appear where these articles were lodged from the days of St. Regnobert to the days of St. Louis. Such a question, perhaps, opens up too wide a field of speculation. Yet it appears certain that these curious articles had in reality nothing to do with St. Regnobert, but were brought from the east in the days of the Crusades. Was not Bishop Robert des Ablêges himself a crusader, the friend and companion of St. Louis? Did not the sainted warrior-king himself present these very articles to the Chapter of the crusading Bishop Robert? Did not this same Prelate build the very sacristy in which they are now preserved?

Was not Robert Guiscard, the conqueror and King of Sicily a Norman by birth? Did not Bishop Odo die in Palermo, and find his place of sepulture in the cathedral of the Sicilian capital? Some intercourse, therefore, between Bayeux and Sicily and the east is not so very difficult to conceive, for the sea, if not the land, was open to all men in the brave days of old.

There is also a metal staff of office, covered on every part by the fleur-de-lys of France, a fine specimen of mediaeval workmanship. Moreover there is the curious helmet and armour of the fifteenth century worn by the attendant who preceded the bishop in processions, and a large chest or press of the thirteenth century in excellent condition. Such early chests are very rare. Amongst articles of more modern type it is worth while to examine the magnificent chalice of Bishop Francis



Nesmond, and also the fine altar furniture wrought in gilt bronze by that skilful artificer Jean Baptiste Caffieri.

The new sacristy is a fine and spacious edifice of very little architectural pretension. There is plenty of room for the choir and chapter to robe, and some elaborate vestments in oaken chests. An adjoining apartment has just been fitted up with a number of magnificent stalls of very fine sixteenth-century carving, for which there is no room in the choir under present arrangements, and which are no longer needed there on account of the great reduction in the total number of the Chapter in modern times. The best wrought stalls may be attributed to J. Lefebvre of Caen.

The **Chapter House** was built in the thirteenth century, abutting on the northern tower of the western façade of the Cathedral, and is a noble specimen of Gothic architecture, with its fine groined roof arranged in four bays exceedingly well proportioned. The four windows on the west side face the main street, and are therefore well seen, seeming from this point of view a kind of low continuation of the western façade.

There is, however, no entrance from the public road, but the proper way into the interior of this beautiful capitular hall is through the north-western side chapel of the Cathedral nave, known as the chapel Bonne Nouvelle, in which the very curious Renaissance altar presents in sculpture the various attributes of the Blessed Virgin Mary as recorded in the Litanies of the mediaeval Church.

Immediately on entering two curious figures, with single heads but double bodies, at the base of pilasters on either side attract the attention of the curious. These grotesque stone creatures probably belong to the fifteenth-century restoration of the Chapter House, as do some other similar quaint sculptures along the walls, as well as the remarkable fresco on the north wall, which represents the Chapter prostrate before the Blessed Virgin Mary, their patron saint. On the sides of this fresco are two clerks pointing out the psalms and canticles which each Canon should recite daily by reason of his benefice.

The exquisite figure of Christ in ivory, once the property of the Princess Lamballe, but now belonging to the Chapter, has been placed against the north wall below the fresco, and is well worthy of examination, though probably not an object of great antiquity.

But in any case be sure to notice the very uncommon glazed tiles which form the face of the step towards the northern end of the building. These tiles are coeval with the original construction, and have always aroused much interest amongst the best antiquaries. The scenes represented are chiefly taken from the chase: for hunting was a popular amusement in the thirteenth century. (See p. 75.)

Yet we reserve for final mention the most curious thing to be found in this ancient chapter house. The Labyrinth or way to Jerusalem remains intact on the floor. Starting at the mouth or opening it is possible to wind through the intricate maze and reach the centre, which represents the Holy City. The labyrinths were laid out in sacred places in the days of the Crusades, and it is said that under a proper pecuniary composition a penitential walk along the labyrinthine maze was considered to have the same religious effect as a pilgrimage journey to the Holy Land. A full description may be found in the "Bulletin Monumental" for 1845, by M. G. Villers. These mediaeval labyrinths, as the learned M. de Caumont observes, are now very rare, and therefore worthy of careful preservation. In very many of the French cathedrals the original chapter house has been destroyed, and therefore the excellent condition of this particular feature at Bayeux is all the more interesting to the lover of Gothic art and mediaeval architecture.

Wace, the clever and brilliant author of the "Roman de Rou," was a canon in 1185 and may be considered the best-known member of the Chapter of Bayeux.

Copies of the following six books closely connected with the Cathedral of Bayeux may be found in the British Museum.

1. Breviarium Bajocense. Ægidius Le Roy. Cadomi, 1771.
2. Cérémonial du Diocèse de Bayeux. Veuve Nicolle. Bayeux, 1819.
3. Choir Book. Diurnal de Bayeux suivant le rit Romain, noté en plain-chant à l'usage des fideles du diocèse. O. Payan. Bayeux, 1898.
4. Diurnal, ou Office complet pour les laïques, latin et français: à l'usage du Diocèse de Bayeux. Veuve Le Roux. Caen, 1821.
5. Missale Bajocense. Societatis Bibliopolarum impensis Lugduni, 1790. (Imperfect).
6. Rituale Bajocense. J. B. Coignard. Parisiis, 1744.







*Photo.]*

*[J. Brechet.*

OLD HALF-TIMBER HOUSE.

## CHAPTER V.

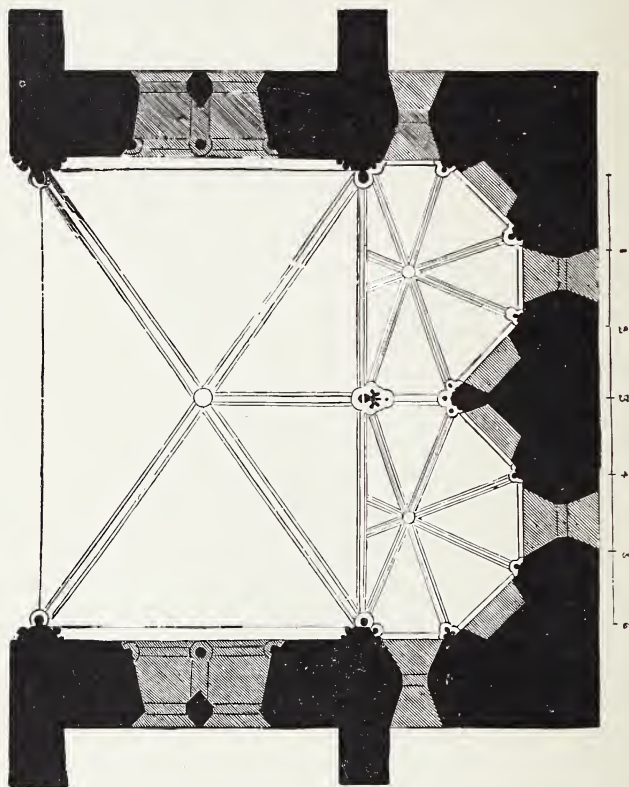
### THE CHAPEL OF THE SEMINARY, ST. LOUP, AND ST. VIGOR.

THREE other buildings at Bayeux deserve a special visit. The Chapel of the Séminaire is situated at no great distance from the Cathedral in a south-easterly direction, and lies back behind the main quadrangle and street front of the present college. It consists of a simple but graceful oblong groined hall with double lancet windows, and a beautifully groined recess behind the altar. It was erected in 1248 by Bishop Guy as the chapel for the hospital or Hôtel Dieu founded a few years earlier by Bishop Robert des Ablêges, and was served by Augustinian Canons.

This chapel is remarkable as a fine specimen of thirteenth-century architecture. In fact the precise method in which the delightful groining is arranged is quite worthy of particular study. The line of the capitals of the vault, and also the line of the capitals of the six windows on either side of the nave, is intentionally retained in the vaulting of the little eastern recess, which is planned as it were for two figures of saints or something of that kind, though there is nothing there, and so one detached shaft of very graceful design stands out in the centre just behind the high altar itself. This quite uncommon arrangement of the east end has attracted the attention of architects and antiquaries in various ages. The result is beautiful, but the reason of it not obvious. It is of course impossible to place the altar against the east wall. This chapel is not large, but quite spacious enough to accommodate the hundred students who are now accustomed to attend there for the celebration of divine service.

The rest of the thirteenth-century hospital having been destroyed, Bishop Francis de Nesmond moved the Séminaire founded by Gilles Buhot to the site of the Priory of the Hôtel Dieu, and refounded the same on a larger scale in 1693. This

bishop's heart was buried in the sanctuary of the chapel. The original fifteenth-century edifice of Gilles Buhot may still be found intact at the end of the Rue Franche. During the dis-



PLAN OF THE EASTERN END OF THE CHAPEL OF THE SEMINARY.

From De Caumont's, "Stat. Mon. de Calvados."

turbed era of the French Revolution the Seminary was converted into a military hospital, and in part into a barracks; but on the restoration of law and order, Bishop Charles Brault, afterwards Archbishop of Albi, the first bishop appointed under the Con-

cordat, brought back the students, and much enlarged the Seminary in 1820. These later buildings form a fine pile, and are quite uninteresting.

In many of the old streets of Bayeux, in addition to the old house mentioned above in the Rue Franche, quaint houses of the fifteenth or sixteenth century may be found here and there scattered about the town, and will arouse the interest and curiosity of the visitor. Some of these houses possess street fronts quite worthy of reproduction in any well-considered account of Bayeux, and we give a typical example by way of illustration of the rest.

The most remarkable specimens of this kind of domestic architecture will be found in the Rue St. Martin, the Rue St. Malo, and the Rue Bienvenue. The house known as the House of the Governor is of stone, and has a turret-tower somewhat in Scottish style.

Near the market, in the Rue Alain Chartier, is a curious old wooden house with this inscription:

Ici naquirent dans le XIV siècle  
Alain Chartier  
Poète, Orateur, Historien,  
et ses deux Frères  
Jean, historiographe de Charles VII.  
Guillaume, évêque de Paris.

The church of **St. Loup**, a canonized Bishop of Bayeux, who like a true saint drove away all wolves and other unpleasant animals from the district of the Bessin, is situated a few yards south of the bridge over the railway, whence you can see to the east the railway station, but cannot reach it without returning through the town, keeping on the south side of the Cathedral. A walk to St. Loup makes a pleasant little excursion and can fatigue no one, for the whole distance is less than a mile from the centre of the town.

This charming church is chiefly famous for its elegant tower and spire, forming a striking example of late twelfth-century workmanship. The remarkable length of the two very narrow windows on each face of the tower on the upper storey gives a peculiar air of lightness and elegance, and certainly deserves special attention. Though the mouldings are Norman, yet these windows are of the type familiar to us as Early English. Note the great beauty of these Norman mouldings and surface

patterns. It is just in this respect that the Norman builders so much excelled.

Examine also the narrow doorway of this tower, with its



*Photo.]*

ST. LOUP.

*[Mon. Hist.*

quaint figure of St. Loup, now much defaced, and the fine moulding of the arch just above the saint's head. Often has this doorway been engraved or lithographed for important books on Norman art and architecture, and conspicuous is its



position in M. de Caumont's monumental work on the historic buildings of Calvados.

Within this sacred edifice there are a few good Norman arches and mouldings, but not much of real interest, as the entire interior has been modernized in a miserable way.

The church of **St. Vigor** is situated about one mile north-east of Bayeux, in the direction of the open sea. Four miles further on is Port-en-Bessin on the sea-shore.

This uninteresting church contains the ancient red marble seat or throne, which is certainly as old as the time of Bishop Odo, and perhaps goes back to a more remote period of antiquity. In former days the bishops were accustomed to take their seat on this marble throne immediately upon their appointment to the bishopric. Here they were met by the entire Cathedral Chapter, and, clothed in the pontifical robes of Bishop Odo, long preserved in the monastery of St. Vigor, they marched in solemn procession to the Cathedral, escorted by the feudal barons of the Bessin and the aldermen of the city. All such ancient ceremonies were swept away in the turbulent days of the French Revolution. In an old cartulary this marble throne is called "*Cathedra lapidea Sancti Vigoris*." The famous monastery of St. Vigor once stood on the northern side of this church, and the mediaeval gateway, in an excellent state of preservation, still remains in its original position, and is an object of great interest to every student of antiquity. Though only a fragment of the vast and wealthy Priory of St. Vigor, nothing else now remains intact except the grange, which has been converted into a chapel for a girls' school, and cannot now be visited. Yet St. Vigor once ranked high amongst Norman priories.

Founded, according to ancient tradition, on a site once occupied by a heathen temple, at the expense and through the liberality of St. Vigor, Bishop of Bayeux, King Childebert is said to have granted the first Royal Charter. Destroyed during the ruthless invasion of the Normans, Bishop Odo repaired or rebuilt this ruined monastic establishment, and filled it with monks from Mount St. Michael, who were dispersed on this prelate's imprisonment in the castle of Rouen in 1084.

After King William's death in 1087, and the Bishop's release, he gave St. Vigor to the Abbey of St. Bénigne at Dijon, whose Abbot retained the superior control till 1702, by which time



the office of Prior had already begun to be held in commendam. Yet St. Vigor kept its property and importance down to the



*N. D. Photo.]*

THE PRIORY OF ST. VIGOR.

period of the French Revolution, when its revenue amounted to 32,000 livres, and the permanent charges by way of deduction to 6,000 livres. It also possessed four smaller priories, and

was patron of twelve parishes. The extensive buildings were then totally destroyed and the entire revenue confiscated by the State.

Amongst the thirteenth-century MSS. preserved in the National Library in the Rue Richelieu, in Paris, is the rent or audit book of the Prior of St. Vigor, for the year 1290.

By way of conclusion to this chapter brief mention may be made of the curiously diverse Royal visitors to this ancient town. Bayeux has not unfrequently been favoured by the presence of Royal personages, and Sovereign princes.

In 996 Richard I., Duke of Normandy, was at Bayeux, where he had been educated. Richard II., Duke of Normandy, was accustomed to hunt in this neighbourhood. Compare the curious passage in the "Roman de Rou."

A Vernei vint, ço fu la fin  
Une fôrest de Baessin;  
As piez li chaï sudément,  
Merci cria mult humblement.

In 1077 William the Conqueror came to Bayeux with Queen Matilda for the dedication of the Cathedral on July 14th.

In 1256 St. Louis, King of France, visited Bayeux on his way to Brittany.

In 1306 Philip le Bel, King of France, came to Bayeux.

In 1450 Charles VII. visited Bayeux, the English having recently been expelled.

In 1475 Louis XI. made a formal entry into Bayeux, accompanied by Louis de Harcourt, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Bishop of Bayeux; and by Louis de Bourbon, Admiral of France.

In 1487 Charles VIII. came to this town.

In 1552 Francis I. spent two days at Bayeux, accompanied by the Dauphin and the Cardinal of Lorraine.

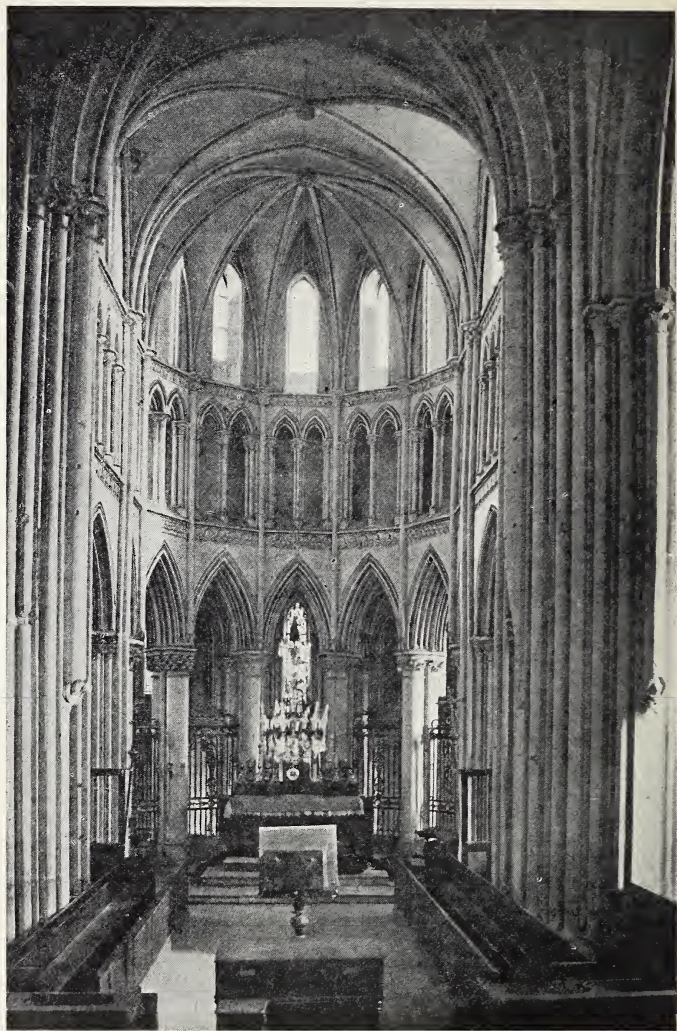
In 1692 James II., King of England, was here, engaged on an abortive attempt to sail to his lost kingdom.

In 1786 the Count of Artois, afterwards King Charles X. came to Bayeux on his way to inspect the government works at Cherbourg, and stayed with the Bishop.

In the same year Louis XVI. visited the town, accompanied by a number of the nobility, also on his way to Cherbourg.

In 1812 Napoleon and Marie Louise made a triumphal entry into Bayeux, and passed on to Cherbourg.

In 1814 the Duc de Berry came, and in 1817 the Duc d'Angoulême.



NORREY: THE CHOIR.





THAON.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ENVIRONS OF BAYEUX.

THE neighbourhood of Bayeux is unique. Thickly scattered over the adjacent country in wonderful profusion are little gems of parish churches of Norman origin, with very frequently fine additions in the best Gothic style. The old days of the strong sway of the Norman Dukes were days signalized by deep and profound religious movements, whose traces are still visible in this twentieth century in the uncommon number of fine ecclesiastical monuments to be found throughout Normandy. Norrey and Bretteville are the most accessible of these monuments to Bayeux, being situated on either side of the station of the same name on the way to Caen. The towers of both these churches are visible from the train, and both are well worth a visit.

Norrey is really important, being in many ways unique. The eastern portion of this church is beautiful Gothic of the four

teenth century. The nave is a century earlier in date. The best and briefest description of this sacred edifice is to say that it is a miniature cathedral. Though only a little parish church, yet the general ground-plan presents all the special characteristics of cathedral architecture.

Bretteville has a noble Gothic choir, well worth seeing. The tower has been much injured by lightning. The agricultural wealth of the neighbourhood of Bayeux, and more particularly the district around Norrey, is commemorated in the old French rhyme:

*Si tu veux être heureux  
Vas entre Caen et Bayeux.*

Here the amount of corn grown per acre was larger than in other parts of Normandy, while the population was and still is scarce and thin.

Sometimes Norman Abbeys have been transformed into farm-houses. An interesting example of this transformation may be found in the case of the Abbey of Longues in Calvados, not very far from Bayeux. The gateway is still preserved, with a figure in the niche, and some portion of the



RYES: DOORWAY.

roofless and ruined church, while the ancient buildings make a neat and comfortable residence for the farmer and his family.

There is a tramway from Bayeux towards the sea. The pace is slow, but the country traversed beyond St. Vigor is very full of architectural interest. There is a stopping place at Ryes, where the old Norman church is extremely fine; and has at the south-east angle, below the central tower, an ancient doorway, now disused, containing a figure of a bishop in the arch—is it St. Loup? The choir is early thirteenth-century work, not so

old as the nave. Do not fail to notice the very curious sculpture found on the ancient capitals in the western portion of this church. Here it was that the faithful Hubert, Lord of Ryes, received William the Conqueror, when in flight from Valognes and the rebel barons, and, giving him a fresh horse, enabled him to ride in safety to his native place, the strong Castle of Falaise. The quiet, sleepy little village, as it is seen to-day, looks as if nothing so exciting had happened there since the time



RYES.

when Duke William took refuge within its bounds in the brave days of old. Not far from the station there are some remains of a fortified farm-house, in part modernized.

Beyond Ryes you are beginning to approach a tract of country by the sea peculiarly rich in fine churches, all close together, many of which were originally built by the Norman barons as thank-offerings to God in the days of their great prosperity during the twelfth century, for it was not far from this part of the country that the Norman fleet had sailed for England.



Nearly all of these churches possess points of special interest, and they all bear witness to the deeply devotional character of the Norman baronage. We have only space to give an illustra-



BERNIÈRES.

tion of the very charming tower and spire of Bernières, the most graceful example to be found in this district. The point where the spire and tower join, is very elegantly adorned with little turrets at the angles, which much enhance the artistic effect. The large windows also give additional lightness. The nave and

aisles of this fine church are Norman work of the eleventh and twelfth century. Above the six arches of the nave runs the fine Norman clerestory, and the vaulted roof of good design. There is no triforium. In the large choir there are fine retables and stalls of the seventeenth century which have been inserted into the beautiful Early Pointed workmanship, which distinguishes the eastern portion of this church. There is no apse, but the termination of the chancel is square. The curious details are worthy of study.

Langrune is close to the sea, and very near Bernières. Here also there is a fine church, belonging to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The main arches and columns of the nave are of the Transition period. There are also aisles, transepts, a pentagonal apse, and a blind triforium. There is also a singularly beautiful tower and spire, without any pinnacles at the angles. From within the interior of the spire is visible to the top, and the lower stage of the tower forms a lantern to the interior of the church. The entire structure is vaulted, and the vaulting of the nave is strengthened by external flying buttresses. The mouldings of the doorway in the north transept are very chaste and delicate.

Other churches of interest in this neighbourhood are Cambes, Mathieu, Douvres, Luc, Beny, Fontaine-Henri, Thaon, Cairon and Rosel.

Artists will be charmed by the picturesque little deserted church of Thaon, situated in a quiet valley off the Creully road. This sacred edifice is a striking specimen of Norman architecture, for the most part belonging to the twelfth century, with a curious tower belonging to the eleventh century. This old tower is constructed in two stories, each containing double windows, and is surmounted by a four-sided stone roof. At the angles quaint heads of animals are sculptured, appropriately characteristic of early Norman workmanship. In fact, this quaint church is fairly typical of the kind of sacred building that sprung up throughout the country villages under the stern rule of the Norman Dukes. The fine renaissance Château Fontaine-Henri, whose walls are richly decorated with arabesques, whose chimneys are a masterpiece of fifteenth-century design, is situated only one and a half miles from Thaon. This noble château possesses a thirteenth-century chapel, while the choir of the parish church belongs to the twelfth century. (See p. 59.)

By way of conclusion, it may be well to mention the curious little parish church of Périers, where may be found a very striking example of the extensive use of the herring-bone pattern for purposes of decoration. The roofless condition of this ancient portion of the church has fortunately not interfered with the due preservation of the original walls, and it will be clearly seen from the various illustrations what elaborate use the Norman



PÉRIERS.

builders made of this pattern on the flat surface of their wall work.

Our space forbids any further description of the interesting environs of Bayeux, but enough has been said to prevent the visitor leaving this old-world town without making himself more or less acquainted with the adjacent country, so rich in historical association and also in architectural monuments. It must have been on account of the richness of the parish churches in his diocese, as well as the grandeur and antiquity of his Cathedral,

that the Bishop of Bayeux claimed to rank next to the Archbishop of Rouen amongst the Norman prelates. And the only prelate who disputed this claim in mediaeval times was the Bishop of Lisieux. His claim was grounded on the fact of the annexation of a temporal Lordship to his See.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE TAPESTRY.

THERE is throughout Northern France no more remarkable record of the stirring events of the eleventh century than the Bayeux Tapestry. Various theories have in different centuries been held concerning it, but since the publication of Professor Freeman's great work on the Norman Conquest, there is but one tenable opinion. The learned Professor in his most judicial spirit announces, "I do not hesitate to say that I look on the Tapestry as holding the first place among the authorities on the Norman side.

"I believe that it was made for Bishop Odo, and that it was most likely designed by him as an ornament for his newly built cathedral church of Bayeux. In coming to these conclusions I have been mainly guided by what seems to me the unanswerable internal evidence of the Tapestry itself."

It is certainly beyond our province to attempt to examine in detail all the Professor's learned arguments. Suffice it to say that much store is set upon the actual design and minute information given in the famous battle scene, and his striking argument is here maintained in the true historic spirit. "I think that no one can see the end of the battle, the Housecarls every one lying dead in his harness, while the light-armed are taking to flight, some of them on the horses of the fallen, and not feel that he is in the presence of a work traced out by one who had himself seen the scenes which he thus handed down to later ages."

Everything in reality goes to prove the Tapestry a contemporary work. The shape of the nose-pieces, the lack of armour on the horses, bespeak a military expedition of the eleventh century. The bearded or beardless warrior proves his Saxon or Norman race. The actual notice of Turolf, Wadard and Vital,



comparatively insignificant retainers of Bishop Odo, points to the working of the Tapestry when these hardy warriors were still living. The king himself fighting on foot, and not on horse-back as in a later age, is also a further fact worthy of notice; and altogether the local tradition that Queen Matilda<sup>1</sup> herself had a hand in the embroidery of the worsted seems worthy of credence. As Bishop Odo's cathedral was dedicated in 1077, the date of the Tapestry can be approximately fixed, and in all likelihood its completion falls within the aforementioned year.

The Tapestry is 230 feet long, and 18 inches wide, 13 of which contain the record of the various events, and the remaining 5 inches serve for the border, containing scenes from Æsop's fables, fabulous and grotesque animals, and towards the end the bodies of the slain in battle. It is worked in embroidery, in coloured woollen thread, on this long strip of linen cloth now rather brown from age.

It presents the Norman account of the battle of Hastings, and the events which led up to that battle.

The fifty-eight scenes have generally Latin inscriptions above, worked into the linen cloth, explaining the different events below. The figures are in outline, not filled in, and resemble a girl's sampler, or a lady's crewel work, rather than tapestry in the modern sense. Wonderful care is taken, and this care is wonderfully successful, in maintaining in every scene the distinct characteristics in the general appearance of William and Harold, and in the quaint portraiture of Edward the Confessor. His increasing age and infirmities are distinctly noticeable as the day of his death approaches. Earl Harold also, in most of the places where his portraiture appears, seems afraid of William, and this sense of fear is particularly distinct when Harold has to take the famous oath to the Norman Duke.

It may be well to give some account of the scenes themselves, as thus it will appear that the real object of the Tapestry was to

<sup>1</sup> It therefore seems quite needless to burden the pages of this book with the theory of those well-known authors who have confused Matilda the Queen with Maude (or Matilda) the Empress, who made war on King Stephen in another century, who escaped over the hard frozen marshes from the besieged Castle of Oxford in male disguise, and accomplished many wonderful feats. Neither this theory, nor any other need be here discussed, or considered: for any such discussion or consideration can only serve to weary and mislead the reader.



justify Duke William's descent upon England upon legal and moral grounds, quite apart from and in addition to his practical success in warfare.

The following events are recorded on the Tapestry.

1. King Edward the Confessor sends Harold to Normandy, apparently to announce to Duke William that he will one day be King of England.

2. Harold starts on the journey.

3. The church of Bosham in Sussex, where Harold prays for a prosperous voyage.

4. Harold crosses the English Channel.

5. Harold is driven by a severe storm on Ponthieu. Here notice the quaint drawing of the sailor who from the masthead first sees the coast of Picardy.

6. Harold lands on the rugged coast of Ponthieu, in the Province of Picardy.

7. Immediately on landing he is made a prisoner by Guy, Earl of Ponthieu.

8. Harold rides to Beaurain in the company of Earl Guy. Note that Harold's servants are bareheaded, without swords. Guy is on horseback.

9. A formal interview takes place between Guy and Harold. The Earl of Ponthieu is seated, while Harold stands in a posture of humility.

10. Two ambassadors from Duke William to Earl Guy arrive at Beaurain, and demand the release of Harold. The Picard Earl receives them standing, with somewhat of an air of haughtiness. His mantle is open on the right shoulder, but tucked up on the left.

11. The ambassadors of William use threats to Earl Guy. They seem to say that if Earl Harold is not delivered up, then William Duke of Normandy will march his powerful army against Earl Guy. What can he do then? Near this point the border contains a suggestive block, and an executioner with his hatchet.

12. A swift messenger on bended knee delivers his message to Duke William, seated on his throne beside his castle gate. Over the gate are two sentinels.

13. Harold is delivered up to Duke William at the castle of Eu, the nearest castle in Normandy to the county or earldom of Guy of Ponthieu.

14. Harold is conducted to Rouen by William, and lodged in the Palace.

15. Elgiva, perhaps the daughter of William, and a priest. This scene needs further explanation. It has been suggested that perhaps she was the sister of Harold!

16. Duke William and his army march to St. Michael's Mount with Harold in their company, and commence a campaign against Conan Duke of Brittany. The famous Mount St. Michael is represented by a castle on a small hillock. William is on horseback in scale armour.

17. They next cross the little river Coësnon, and Earl Harold rescues some Norman knights from the treacherous quicksand, being very tall and strong. Note that in the Latin inscriptions Harold is sometimes called Dux Anglorum.

18. They march on Dol, represented by a small tower, and Conan flies to Rennes. Notice the rapid exit of a man of Dol by means of a strong rope let down from the top of the castle.

19. Duke William now attacks Dinan; his troops set fire to the palisades.

20. Then a man appears holding out the keys on the end of a lance, which are received by a warrior on horseback at the end of another lance, to which a small banner is affixed.

21. Earl Harold distinguished himself by his courage and bravery in this Breton war, and in consequence receives the honour of knighthood at the hands of Duke William, who puts an iron helmet on Harold's head.

22. William and Harold travel together to Bayeux.

23. Harold takes his oath to William, who is seated on his throne, clothed in his ducal robe, holding a sword in his right hand. Harold is placed between two large chests full of sacred relics, placing his right hand on one chest, and his left hand on the other. Much controversy has arisen as to the exact nature of Harold's oath on this occasion, and also as to whether Harold was aware at the time of the presence of the relics, as well as whether this solemn oath was taken at Bayeux, or some other west Norman town. Yet the remarkable scene in the Tapestry seems to imply that by this solemn oath Harold became Duke William's man, and thus in effect gave up his claim to the crown of England in favour of the Norman Duke. The Tapestry fixes Bayeux as the place where Harold swore his fateful oath.

24. Harold returns to England laden with rich and costly

presents. King Edward's men are on the outlook for his arrival.

25. He gives King Edward an account of his embassy.

26. The King is on his throne. A soldier with a battle-axe stands behind him.



*Hic Willelm venit Bagias ubi Harold sacramentum fecit Willelmo Duci.*

HAROLD TAKES THE OATH TO WILLIAM AT BAYEUX.

27. King Edward's last illness, death and burial in St. Peter's Church, Westminster.

28. The dying Sovereign explains his last will and testament to the assembled nobles, and receives the benediction from a priest. Eight bearers convey his bier, which is very rich, to



*Hic Eadwardus Rex in tecto  
alloquitur fideles.*

*Hic defunctus est.*

*Hic dederunt Haroldo  
coronam Regis.*

*Hic residet Harold  
Rex Anglorum  
Stigant Archieps.*

THE DEATH OF EDWARD AND CORONATION OF HAROLD.

St. Peter's Church. By the side two boys are walking, each with a bell in his hand. A large crowd follows. Above the church a hand is stretched out from heaven in the act of benediction. The suggestion is that heaven approves all the acts of the saintly Edward. These quaint scenes have somehow got placed in the wrong order, thus the burial precedes the death.

29. The crown of England is offered to Harold, who accepts the heavy burden.

30. He is crowned by Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, and is represented seated on the throne, with the sceptre in his right hand, and the orb and cross in his left hand. Some English chroniclers say he was crowned by Ealdred, Archbishop of York.

31. The nobles of England and the people do homage to King Harold, acclaiming him King with loud and joyful shouts.

32. The wonderful comet of the year 1066, portending the immediate occurrence of great events, attracts general attention, when a messenger reaches the King with important news. In all likelihood he bears the evil tidings of the sudden descent of the Norwegians on our northern shores. Some writers have thought he bears alarming news from Normandy, but this is unlikely, for the news of Harold's coronation has not yet reached the shores of France.

33. Harold therefore puts on his armour, and prepares to await the course of events.

34. An English ship is now seen nearing the Norman coast, doubtless bringing the unwelcome news of Harold's coronation to the Norman Duke.

35. William acts with the greatest promptitude. He at once orders his fleet to be prepared, and is also careful to obtain the support of the Pope. Trees are cut down, and formed into planks; vessels are built and drawn down to the sea.

36. The ships are launched amid stirring scenes of marvellous activity.

37. The Norman fleet is armed and provisioned. Great activity is shown in this respect. Men are carrying armour, food and wine to the various ships.

38. Duke William sails from Normandy after being detained for a season by contrary winds, and lands at Pevensey. His own vessel is represented as larger than the rest of the fleet. It carries a banner, and there is a cross on the mast. Pope Alexander II. had sent William a consecrated banner, which may be here portrayed. At least he claims the blessing of the Church.

39. The horses are landed with very great care. One horse seems restive, not liking the sea voyage.

40. The Norman baronage march towards Hastings.

41. Wadar (who is mentioned as a vassal of Bishop Odo in Domesday) looks after the commissariat, and does his work well.

42. The preparation of the feast. One warrior has a pig on his back. Another has charge of a sheep. An ox, foreboding evil, prances about in a marvellous way.

43. Duke William and the Norman Barons hold their first banquet on English soil. Bishop Odo says grace before dinner.

44. Duke William, Bishop Odo, and Robert Earl of Mortain hold a council of war. Odo is here seated on William's right hand. The three counsellors look somewhat anxious.



*Hic Willelm Dux in magno navigio mare*



*transivit et venit ad Pevenesae.*

WILLIAM SAILS FROM NORMANDY TO PEVENSEY.

45. The camp is fortified under the direction of Earl Robert. Notice the very solid bits of earth the soldiers dig up in forming the trenches.

46. William receives information that Harold, King of England, is approaching, and his courage and wrath are simultaneously aroused.

47. A house is set on fire and burnt down, apparently with the object of frightening the English.

48. The Normans now advance in battle array, headed by their Duke in full armour, all ready for the fight.

49. To be sure of his position, William now questions Vital



the scout, who has been sent out to reconnoitre. He will not wait for Harold to attack, but takes the field at once.

50. The advance of Duke William towards the battlefield is announced to King Harold.

51. William makes a speech to his army on the eve of the great battle.



*Hic Odo Ep̄s baculum tenens,  
confortat pueros.*

*Eustatius*

*Illic Franci fugnant.*

BISHOP ODO OF BAYEUX ENCOURAGES THE FRENCH.

Henry of Huntingdon and William of Poitiers both profess to have preserved the entire substance of this speech. (*See their Chronicles.*) The battle now begins in real earnest.

52. Lewine and Gyrð, the two brothers of King Harold, are now slain.

53. The fight waxes fiercer, and the field of battle is long disputed. Arrows, darts and javelins fly in all directions. Many are killed.

54. The Normans are hard pressed, and are encouraged by the energy and bravery of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who rides forward on his fine horse, club in hand. Particularly note how he turns back the horse of a Norman already retreating.

55. Duke William raises his visor to prove to the Norman baronage that the rumour of his death or serious wounding is an absolute falsehood, and gives fresh orders to his troops.

56. Stirred by the exhortation of the Bishop, and the presence of the Duke, the Normans put the English to flight.

Eustace, Earl of Boulogne, who advised retreat, was himself slain, and many corpses of Norman and English appear on every side. Some of these are being robbed of their coats of mail.

57. King Harold is slain. He is represented fallen from his horse, outstretched upon the ground. The famous battle of Hastings is now at an end.





*Harold Rex interfectus est :*

*et fuga verterunt Angli.*

THE DEATH OF HAROLD AND FLIGHT OF THE ENGLISH.

58. The general flight of the English troops now ensues, and Duke William is entirely victorious.

The end of the Tapestry is ragged, and there may once have been another scene showing William's coronation as King of England.

Of these fifty-eight scenes the most important in reality are those which represent King Edward the Confessor designating Duke William as his heir, Earl Harold taking the oath to William on the holy relics, the lonely death of Edward the Confessor, the coronation of Harold by Archbishop Stigand, the successful voyage of William to Pevensey, the battle of Hastings and the death of Harold's two brothers, Bishop Odo of Bayeux encouraging the Normans, and the death of King Harold.

But it has been thought well to give some slight account of all the compartments in this most remarkable Tapestry, so important a monument of English history, in order that the reader may be able to appreciate for himself its high and unique value.

Napoleon was not slow to catch one of the main ideas of the Tapestry when he sent it round France from town to town, and had it exhibited in the theatres of Paris in the year 1808, if perchance he might stir up the spectators to the bold attempt of a second conquest of England. But times were changed since the old Norman days, and bold and fearless as he was, yet Napoleon hesitated to actually invade Great Britain.

This famous Tapestry was preserved in the Cathedral until the French Revolution, and is mentioned in an old inventory of the property of the Chapter taken in 1476. It was hung round the arches of the nave on certain saints' days. It is now

well taken care of in a large room in the Public Library situated at No. 37, Place St. Sauveur, and protected by a glass covering; though at one time it was kept on a roller at the Hotel de Ville, and unwound for the due inspection of visitors, an unwise process which tended to its decay and destruction. Charles Stothard made an excellent engraving of it for the Society of Antiquaries of London in the earlier part of the last century.<sup>1</sup>

To fully appreciate the vigour and expression of the design, and the skilful management of the worsted thread, the Tapestry must itself be seen, and also carefully studied: for no description however complete gives an adequate idea of the real character of the strange needlework generally attributed to Queen Matilda, and certainly wrought by deft hands for Odo, Bishop of Bayeux.

<sup>1</sup> For a complete account of the tapestry, with illustrations of the whole work, see "The Bayeux Tapestry," a history and description by Frank Rede Fowke, 1898. (Bell.)



THIRTEENTH-CENTURY TILE FROM  
THE CHAPTER HOUSE.

THE LIST OF THE BISHOPS OF BAYEUX, WITH THE DATES  
OF THEIR APPOINTMENT.

- St. Exuperius, died 405.  
405. St. Rufinian.  
431. St. Lupus.  
St. Patricius. (?)  
470. St. Manvieu.  
480. St. Contest.  
514. St. Vigor.  
538. Leucadius.  
557. Lascifus.  
581. Leudovaldis.  
615. St. Geretrand.  
625. St. Regnobert.  
689. St. Gerbold.  
691. St. Frambold.  
722. St. Hugo.  
765. Leodening.  
809. Thior.  
833. Carevilt.  
835. Ermbert or Harimbertus.  
840. St. Sulpicius. (?)  
846. Baltfrid or Baufroï.  
858. Fortold.  
859. Erchambert.  
927. Henricus.  
965. Hugo II.  
968. Richard.  
990. Raoul of Avranches.  
1015. Hugo III. de Bayeux.  
1049. Odo de Conteville.  
1097. Turoid de Bremoy.  
1108. Richard II. de Douvres.  
1135. Richard III.  
1142. Philippe de Harcourt.  
1164. Henry de Beaumont, the Englishman.  
1206. Robert des Ablêges.  
1232. Thomas de Fréauville.  
1241. Guido.  
1263. Odo or Eudes II. de Lorris.  
1274. Gregorius de Neapoli, nepos Gregorii IX.

- 1276. Petrus de Benais.
- 1306. William Bonnet.
- 1312. William de Trie, translated to Rheims.
- 1324. Petrus de Lévis.
- 1331. William de Beaujeu.
- 1338. William Betrand, translated from Noyon, and afterwards translated to Beauvais.
- 1347. Petrus de Villaines, translated from Auxerre.
- 1360. Louis Tézart, translated to Rheims.
- 1373. Milo de Dormans, translated from Angers, and afterwards translated to Beauvais.
- 1375. Nicolas du Bosc.
- 1408. John de Boisse.
- 1412. John Langret.
- 1420. Nicolas Habart.
- 1432. Zaenon de Castiglione, translated from Lisieux.
- 1460. Louis de Harcourt, Patriarch of Jerusalem.
- 1480. Carolus de Neufchatel.
- 1499. Renatus de Brie. Cardinal in 1506.
- 1516. Ludovicus de Canossa, translated from Tricarico.
- 1531. Petrus de Martigny, translated from Castres.
- 1531. Augustin Trivulce, Cardinal. Cardinal in 1517, Chamberlain to Pope Julius II.
- 1548. Carolus d'Humières.
- 1573. Bernardin de S. François.
- 1583. Mathurin de Savonnières.
- 1586. Charles de Bourbon, Cardinal, not consecrated: uncle of Henry IV., put forward by the Duke of Guise as claimant to the French throne as Charles X., afterwards imprisoned at Fontenai, where he died.
- 1590. Renatus de Daillon du Lude.
- 1600. Arnaud d'Ossat, translated from Rennes.
- 1606. Jacob d'Angennes.
- 1647. Edward Molé.
- 1655. Francis Servie.
- 1662. Francis de Nesmond. He was consecrated Bishop in March, 1662, and dying May 16, 1715, was buried in the crypt of his Cathedral, beside Bishop Louis de Harcourt.
- 1716. M. le Cardinal de la Tremouille. Took possession of the See by deputy, and was transferred to the Arch-

- bishopric of Cambray in 1719, and died at Rome in 1720.
1719. Francis Armande de Lorraine d'Armagnac. He was nominated by the Duke of Orléans, Regent of France, and took possession of the See in 1720. He died at Paris in 1728.
1729. Paul d'Albert de Luynes. He became Archbishop of Sens in 1753, and a Cardinal in 1756. He was a member of the Academy of France.
1753. Peter Julius Cæsar de Rochechouart. He retired in 1775, and died at Montigny in 1781. He was translated from Evreux.
1777. Joseph Dominic Cheylus. Almoner to the Countess of Artois, became bishop, and on the Revolution retired to Jersey, where he died in 1797, aged eighty. He was translated from Cahors.
1791. Claude Fauchet. He was named Constitutional Bishop Calvados. He became deputy to the National Convention, and was executed in 1793.
1799. Julien Jean Baptiste Duchemin. He was named Constitutional Bishop, and died the same year.
1799. Louis Charles Bisson. He was named Constitutional Bishop, and afterwards conformed to the Concordat.
1802. Charles Brault. He was appointed Bishop after the Concordat, and in 1817 became Archbishop of Albi; and was named a Peer of France.
1823. Charles Francis Duperrier Dumourier.
1827. John Charles Richard Dancel
1836. Louis Francis Robin.
1856. Charles Nicholas Peter Didiot.
1866. Flavian Abel A. Hugonin. Sometime tutor to the Prince Imperial.
1898. Leon Adolphe Amette.

The above list is the received list of bishops. The names and dates of the early bishops before Henry, who was appointed in 927, are really uncertain. Many good authorities regard St. Regnobert as the second bishop, next to St. Exuperius; but we have churches dedicated to St. Lupus and St. Vigor, which is a sufficient proof of their early occupancy of the See of Bayeux. Anyway, there seems to have been a long vacancy after the time of Bishop Erchambert.

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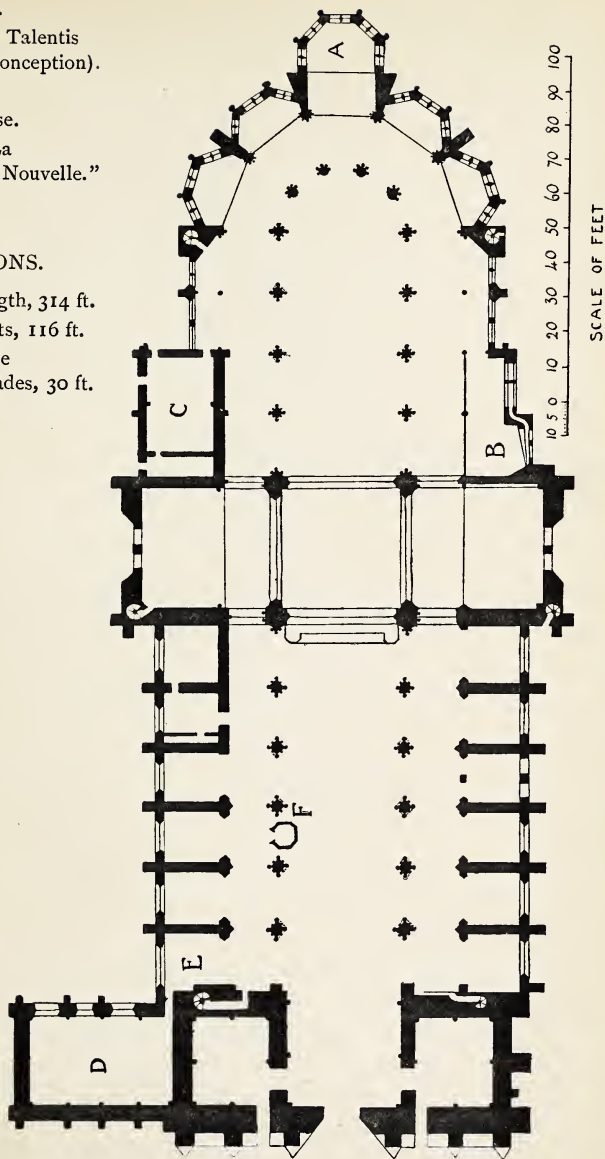


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- A Lady Chapel.
- B Chapel of De Talentis  
(de la Conception).
- C Old Sacristy.
- D Chapter House.
- E Chapel of "La  
Bonne Nouvelle."
- F Pulpit.

DIMENSIONS.

Total internal length, 314 ft.  
 Length of transepts, 116 ft.  
 Width between the  
 main arcades, 30 ft.



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